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HISTORY
OF
LOCH KINNORD.

" They fade, and fall, and pass ; their glories set ;
Blind time heeds not, men see, but men forget.
Think not that these pale shadows, dimly cast
By the mist-shrouded orb that lights the past,
Stand as they stood *once* in Time's earlier years."

—Newdigate Prize Poem,

By J. BROOKS,

Merton Coll., Oxon.

HISTORY OF LOCH KINNORD.



BY
REV. J. G. MICHIE,
DINNET.

EDINBURGH: DAVID DOUGLAS.

1877.



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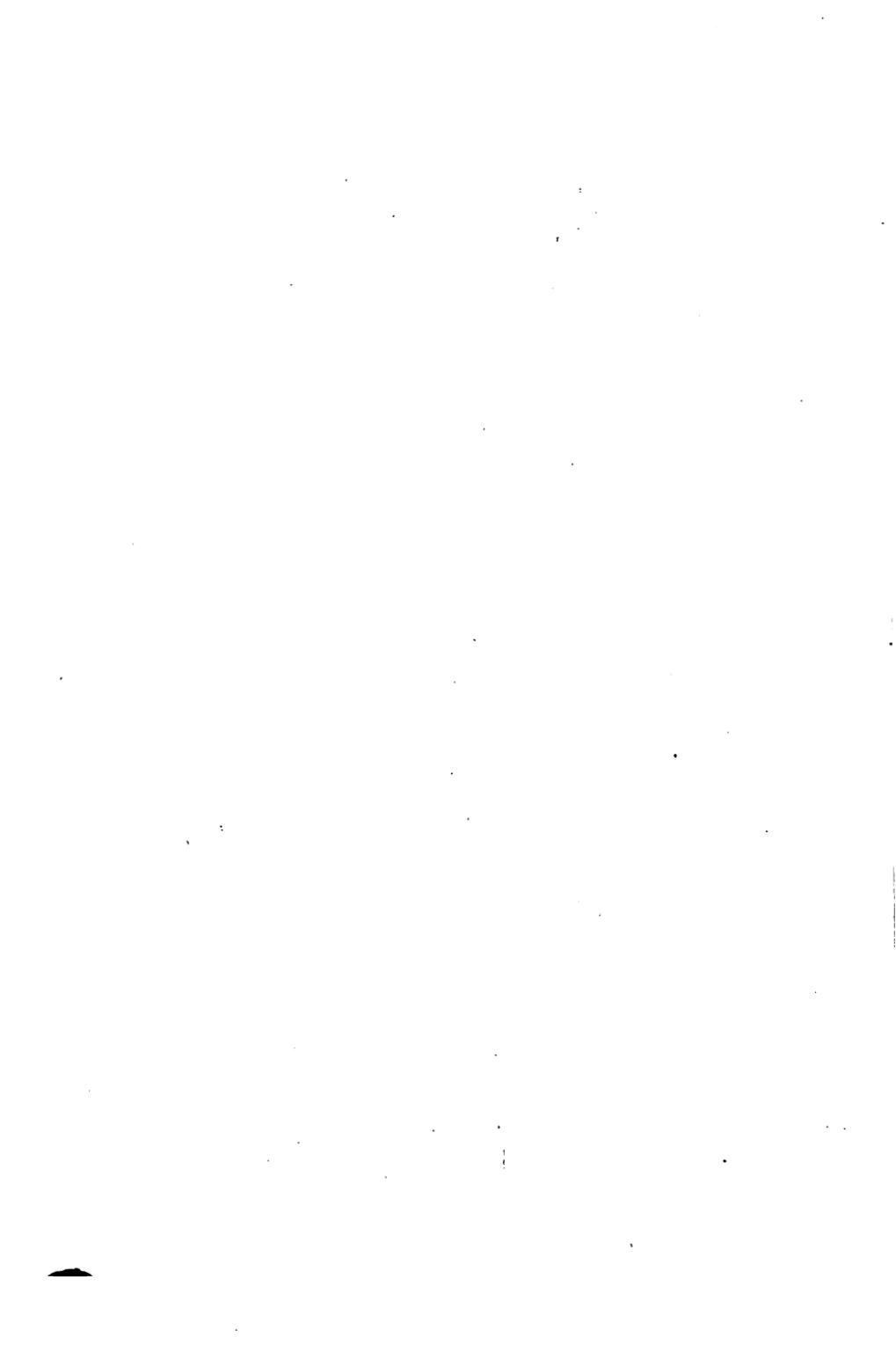
TO
Charles Gordon,
ELEVENTH MARQUIS OF HUNTLY,
THE PRESENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
ELDEST MALE LINE
OF
The Illustrious Family of Gordon,
WHO, FOR NEARLY FIVE CENTURIES, HAVE BEEN THE
HONOURED AND RIGHTFUL OWNERS
OF THE INTERESTING DISTRICT OF LOCH KINNORD,
THE FOLLOWING BRIEF SKETCH OF
ITS HISTORY,
AS A SMALL ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF
HIS LORDSHIP'S ENLIGHTENED AND GENEROUS EFFORTS
TO PROMOTE THE TEMPORAL AND SPIRITUAL WELFARE
OF ITS INHABITANTS,
IS MOST RESPECTFULLY AND DUTIFULLY
INSCRIBED BY
THE AUTHOR.





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P R E F A C E.

IT may be necessary to state, for the sake of those who are strangers on Deeside, that Loch Kinnord, with the history of which the following pages are concerned, is situated in the valley of the Dee, five miles beyond Aboyne, near the Dinnet Station of the Deeside Railway. In order to make the chapter on the geology of the district as brief as possible, places are indicated by simple reference to their local names, as, in the opinion of the author, the shortest and surest direction that could be given to a stranger who might wish to examine them minutely.

For a more detailed description of the archæology of the district than could be given here, the antiquarian reader is referred to a paper on the subject read before the Society of Antiquaries, at

their meeting in June, 1875, and to the work of Miss MacLaggan on the "Hill Forts and Stone Circles of Scotland."

First among many friends from whom the author has received aid in the preparation of this little work, his warmest thanks are due to the Marquis of Huntly, but for whose kind and generous assistance it would not have appeared at the present time, nor at all in its present form.

From the late lamented Dr. John Stuart—to whose memory the author owes a grateful tear—he obtained much valuable information and encouragement. An acknowledgment of obligation is also due to Andrew Jervise, Esq., whose extensive stores of information on archæological subjects have been freely drawn upon. To Wm. Alexander, Esq., of the *Free Press*, for his great kindness in revising the proof, and thus much facilitating the progress of the work through the press; and to Mr. Rettie, Aberdeen, and Mr. Douglas, the publisher, for much valuable advice, the author has also to express his thanks.

DINNET, 1st September, 1877.



LOCH KINNORD.

Chapter I.

INTRODUCTORY.

Less than thirty years ago the upward traveller by the old Deeside coach, on crossing the burn of Dinnet, was apt to fancy himself as entering some vast wilderness of brown heath, where no human habitation had ever stood ; and for the next three miles of his journey this impression was likely to be rather strengthened than dissipated by the aspect of the country on either hand. Generally, therefore, it was with a feeling of relief that he found himself wheeled down the somewhat dangerous descent of the narrow old county road, where it swept in alarming proximity to dark Pol Phanterich, from the rocky buttress of Culblean to the door of the roadside hostelry of Cambus o' May. But though concealed from his view, he had all the while been skirting a

locality as lovely and picturesque as the moor he had crossed was barren and dreary.

At that time very few strangers were aware of the existence of Loch Kinnord, and fewer still knew anything of the charms of its scenery ; while the interesting remains of antiquity that abound in the vicinity were but little explored. No one had seen them who could understand their significance or read their story.

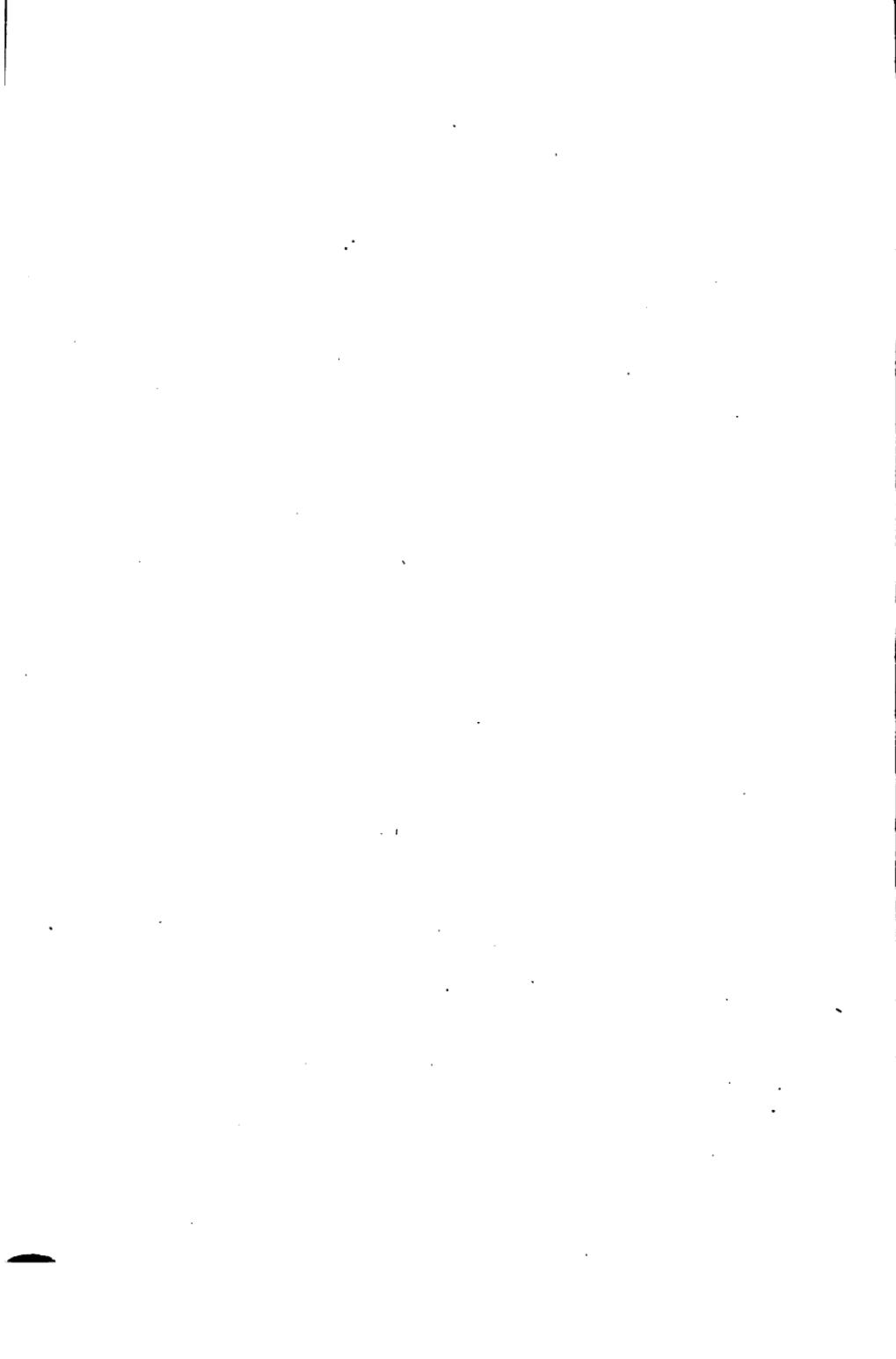
Now all this is changed. The new turnpike, opened in 1857, by winding round the northern slope of the Mickle Ord, brought the lake and its sylvan environs within view of the passing tourist ; but he was content to look at it as at a beautiful scene in a shifting diorama.* There was no convenient place near where he could break his journey and resume it again after a personal examination of the locality. At length, however, the opening of the railway between Aboyne and Ballater (16th Oct., 1866) gave the desired opportunity. The stations at Dinnet and Cambus o' May afford convenient points from which to reach the lake, whose beautiful shores are now annually visited by crowds

* So little was the locality even then known, that in the edition of the Deeside Guide published in 1866, Loch Kinnord and Loch Davan are placed three miles apart, and the line of the Tarland and Ballater road is made to pass between them, whereas they are not 100 yards apart, and the road passes to the north of Loch Davan.

of holiday excursionists. Rich in treasures of science and relics of long forgotten ages, it has now become a centre of attraction for naturalists and antiquaries. Some of these relics are of so hoar an antiquity that they throw around the scene something of a hallowed character, suggesting to the intelligent visitor "thoughts of other years," and raising in the imagination pictures of a state of society so remote, that the very outlines of it are but faintly traceable, so far back do they lie in the long vista down which we look into pre-historic times.

It is with the view of guiding in some measure these thoughts, and throwing, if possible, some light on these pictures that the following brief history of Kinnord is offered to those whose pleasure or curiosity may lead them to visit this interesting district.







Chapter II.

GEOLOGICAL RECORD.

IN speaking of the changes which the face of the country has undergone in the lapse of geological time, I can only advert to those that have occurred within the most recent period—that during which the superficial deposits, the till, the gravel, the sand, the travelled boulders, the soil, and the moss were produced, and came to occupy their present positions. If we should seek to go farther back than this in quest of information, we should find no resting place, no record to read till we had descended to the very earliest ages; for we have in this part of Scotland no intervening deposits between the newest and the oldest. The meaning of this fact probably, though not certainly, is that never,

“Since Britain first at Heaven’s command
Arose from out the azure main,”

have these parts been for any considerable length of time, if at all, under the waters of the ocean. Whatever place therefore we may take as a people in the history of our race, the country we inhabit will bear comparison in respect of age with any other on the face of the earth ; for in these northern highlands we tread the oldest dry land of the old old world.

But leaving the long geological cycles that have passed since the first appearance of the crystalline rocks on the dry crust of the earth, we shall begin our short history with the period that immediately preceded the deposition of the till that now mostly overlies them.

It was a warm period—a period when the country was clothed with immense forests, in which huge wild beasts roamed, devouring the rank vegetation or preying upon each other. The lion and hyæna were common enough in Scotland, along with the rhinoceros and hippopotamus in England ; while others of a more ancient type, such as the mastodon, and megatherium (*the great wild beast*), lingered around us on the continent—or what we now call the continent, for it is probable that Britain then formed a part of it.

Just as that period was drawing to a close, the valley of the Dee presented an appearance very different from what it does now. Instead of enclosing a clear continuous stream that collects its principal waters amongst the mountains of Braemar, and flows without

interruption over its pebbly or rocky bed to the sea, the valley was then broken up into a series of long, narrow troughs, containing lakes, from the one to the other of which the river leaped over the intervening barriers in grand waterfalls, or rushed through narrow gorges in wild cataracts, of which we have still small examples at Potarch and the Linn of Dee. What is now the spur of Culblean was then an intersecting ridge rising on the south into the Bellamore Crag, behind Headinsch. For long ages the lowest point in this rocky barrier was the *Slock* behind Mr. Gaskell's House, at Cambus o' May, and through this gorge the river, for a great length of time, found its escape from the lake above to the lake below. The polished water worn rocks may still be seen at some points on the north side of the gorge, which has now, however, been mostly filled up with glacial deposits. The immense quantity of river gravel that still remains in flats and mounds at this point is another proof that here the stream emptied itself into the lake. The lighter of these materials—the fine sand, the clay, and the mud—would be carried far into the lake, and sink to the bottom at a long distance off; but the heavier, the gravel and stone, would be deposited as soon as they entered the still water. These would block up the mouth of the river, causing it to diverge by turns to the north and to the south, thus spreading the *debris* it brought down to a considerable distance on either hand,

and, though much altered by after agencies, this is just what we find along what was then the margin of the lake.

The tertiary period, to which we are now referring, was not only a warm period, it was in Scotland also one of great earthquakes. There was even a chain of volcanoes on the west coast, pouring out, in their frequent eruptions, streams of lava, and altering the whole face of the country. It is quite possible that during some of these earthquakes, a deeper fissure might have been formed in the ridge of Culblean, to the south of the present channel of the river; and the water might have escaped through it sometime before the close of this period. I have been led to form this conjecture from finding, on an examination of the deposits brought to light by the extensive works carried out by Mr. Gaskell around his mansion, every nook and crevice in the rocks filled with fine water-wrought sand, evidently carried into these corners by the eddying of the waters. There were sufficient causes in operation during the succeeding epoch to produce this motion in the waters of the lake, and it may have been due to them; but certainly the shifting of the outlet in the manner supposed would have given rise to it, and produced the deposits observed.

At all events, what is now the moor of Dinnet and district of Kinnord formed the largest of the whole

series of lakes that then lay in the line of the valley of the Dee. It was produced by a rocky barrier stretching across the valley near Boghead, and uniting the ridge of Bellrory on the south, with the Mulloch range on the north. Towards the close of the tertiary period the passage of the river over this ridge was about 130 feet above its present bed. The lake formed by this barrier terminated to the west in a fine bay, the shores of which swept round behind the farm of Ballaterich, and stretched northward with many a headland and creek, into the district of Cromar, as far at least as the mansion-house of Blelack. At a former period it had been of much greater extent; but the barrier had gradually got worn down by the action of the water, till towards the close of the tertiary age it had shrunk to something like the above dimensions, *i.e.*, about five miles in length from north to south, and three miles of average breadth. Large as it was, it contained but two small islands, situated about a mile-and-a-half apart, near the middle and deepest portion. The roots of these still remain in the rocky eminences of the two Ords that bound Loch Kinnord, the one on the north and the other on the south.

Slowly diminishing in size, this lake had continued for countless ages to fill the valley; but a change was now drawing on that was greatly to alter the features of the landscape. From some cause, which has not yet

been satisfactorily explained, the climate began to change, and that not for the better. Year by year, or I should rather say, century by century, for the change was slow in its progress, the winter cold became more severe, and the summer heat shorter. The hills, which were then higher and steeper than they are now, began to wear snowy mantles all the year round ; and cold tongues of ice were thrust out from the corries of perpetual snow, and descended a long way down into the valleys beneath. All but the hardiest animals deserted the country. The old forests decayed ; and nothing but a scanty arctic vegetation lurked behind, and that only on sheltered and sunny spots in the low grounds. Still, the winter cold went on increasing in severity till every mountain was covered with perpetual snow, and every valley enclosed its glacier. These glaciers strip the country of its former soil, ground it into a fine powder, and, working it up into a soft clay, dropped into its mass the boulders they had torn from the overhanging rocks, and rolled them along often to a great distance. In this manner was formed underneath the glaciers that extensive deposit of stiff clay studded with stones of all sizes, but mostly somewhat water-rolled, or rather ice-worn, to which geologists give the name of *till*. It generally contained a large quantity of iron, obtained from the decomposed vegetation of the previous era. This element furnished a cement

which, when the deposit settled, bound the clay together somewhat like an asphalted floor, and gave rise to the subsoil which agriculturists dread as the most barren and intractable they have to deal with. In this part of the country they call it *a pan*, which I do not think by any means an inappropriate term.

When the glaciers, descending from the heights of Morven and Culblean, reached the waters of the lake below, they broke off, and floated about as little icebergs, depositing their burdens of stones and gravel here and there over its bottom. Of course many of them would get stranded near the two islands ; and it is just there that we find the greatest accumulation of surface-borne stones and rocky fragments. All this went on for many ages, till the whole country was covered with ice and snow—ice-capped, in short, as much of Greenland now is—and the glaciers actually reached the sea.

The great glacier that occupied the valley of the Dee was probably at that time not less than a thousand feet thick.

When this had lasted for a period of indeterminable duration, the climate began to get milder ; less snow fell in winter, and the summer heat had greater power to melt it. The great ice age was on the wane. But the whole period of its decline was one of fearful floods. The soft snows on the surface melted first ; and

the old valleys being blocked up with hard glacial ice, the streams reeled along in directions often the very reverse of what they now take. And though their courses were over the ice, they carried along quite as much sand and stones as if they had run in channels of ordinary soil ; for these decaying glaciers were covered to a great depth with the rock *debris* that had been accumulating on them for ages. They are sometimes found in this condition still among the Himalayas, so that travellers can scarcely tell whether they be walking on firm ground or on *debris*-covered glaciers. It is this circumstance that has mostly given rise to the difficulty of understanding how mounds of water-borne materials could have been collected in the unlikely situations in which they occur.

At length all the snow and smaller glaciers had shrunk back to the higher hills, but the great glaciers still continued, though in diminished bulk, to fill the main valleys, and obstruct the natural drainage of the country. The Dee glacier, hundreds of feet in thickness, formed a dam at Dinnet so deep that the lake behind it stretched back to the skirts of Morven. Meantime the wear and tear which the face of nature was undergoing was not less during the decay than during the prevalence of the ice age, though the agent and the kind of work done were different. At first it was rivers of ice, now it was headlong floods of water ;

and between them they produced such a transformation of hill and dale, that if one could have seen the country before and after, he could scarcely have known it to be the same. The very hills were different. In most instances their summits were flattened, their sides sloped, and their corries changed. They were, indeed, only the weather-beaten stumps of what they had once been ; while the old lakes that had lain in the valleys below were almost all gone, and their beds occupied by unsightly wastes of water-rolled stones and sand, as bare as fresh river *stanners*. This, at least, was the result in the case of the Moor of Dinnet. Remnants of the former lake, it is true, still survived in straggling patches. But the great ice river had worn away the rocky barrier, and only in the deeper depressions of the old bottom, as at Kinnord, Davan, and the Ordie Moss, was there any water remaining that could properly be called a lake.

Kinnord was a most unlovely place then, with the Dee almost on a level with its lake, coursing in scattered streams round shingly islands here and there. At last, however, it gathered its waters together, and by slow degrees scooped out for itself its present channel. While it was so occupied, and it must have taken a long time to do it, vegetation, under the improving climate, was busy clothing the face of nature. The shallower pools were becoming swamps and morasses ;

every plant was taking root in its suitable habitat, and every tree in its friendly soil. The animal tribes, also, to whose habits the country and climate were favourable, were gradually finding their way back into the unoccupied territory.

When things had arrived at this pass, the Geological record may be said to have closed ; and we next open the PRE-HISTORIC VOLUME.





Chapter III.

PRE-HISTORIC PERIOD.

WE have now to deal with the appearance of man upon the scene, though when or whence he came we know not. A few hundred, or even a thousand, years more or less is of no consequence in fixing a date so remote.

The first human inhabitants of this part of Aberdeenshire probably came from the south, and belonged to some tribe of the great Celtic family. For many years they were in a very savage condition, and had enough to do to maintain their ground against the attacks of the wild beasts of the forest without making war on each other. They had no knowledge of any art save hunting and fishing ; and they have left behind them no record of their manner of life, except a few rude stone cups, and chips of hard rock which served

their simple wants and supplied to them the place of dishes and knives. These are now rarely met with in the district around Kinnord ; and it is therefore probable that the people who used them did not for a great length of time hold undisputed possession of the country.

Another tribe, somewhat more civilized, but belonging to the same Celtic stock, crossed the Grampians and settled on Deeside, making slaves of the former inhabitants, or driving them back into the remoter glens. After some ages these were in like manner dispossessed by some other tribe, hailing also from the south. It was the old story over again, as recorded in Deuteronomy ii., "As he did to the children of Esau which dwelt in Seir, when He destroyed the Horims from before them ; and they succeeded them and dwelt in their stead even unto this day ; and the Avims which dwelt in Hazerim even unto Azzah, the Caphtorims, which came forth out of Caphtor, destroyed them and dwelt in their stead."

Each victorious tribe was, however, more civilized than its predecessor ; and thus a knowledge of one art after another found its way into the district. Each succeeding tribe was also more powerful in numbers than the one it had dispossessed, and required wider lands to support it. These circumstances gave rise to wars between neighbouring tribes, which were at first

carried on with the simplest weapons that nature supplied, namely, clubs and stones. The conflicts they thus engaged in were not an unmixed evil; for the love of mastery, which is one of the strongest passions in the savage mind, supplied a continual and strong stimulus to the contending tribes to invent some more effective engine of destruction than that possessed by their enemies. This set their intellects a working, and tended greatly to promote the progress of art in other and more peaceful departments. Battle stones—round stones attached to the wrist by means of long thongs of skin, which could be thrown at the head of an enemy and then jerked back by the string—are among the earliest manufactured weapons found in the district. There have not many of them been discovered just about Kinnord, because, as I suppose, there was no lack of loose stones on the Moor of Dinnet that would have done quite as well, if not better! To the invention of battle stones succeeded that of slings; to the slings stone darts; and to the stone darts, bows and arrows. Relics of all these are found, though rarely, in the soils and morasses around Kinnord, and testify to the sanguinary struggle for possession then going on.

Meantime much improvement had taken place in the arts of peace. The old rude stone cup had been superseded by an ornamental article furnished with a handle; and the rough chip that did duty for a knife

was going out of fashion, and regularly-shaped flints were coming into use instead ; while for heavier work, stone axes and hammers were being fabricated. About this time also the purchase power of the lever was discovered ; and not long after an ingenious practical application of the principle was made, by attaching levers or handles to the hammers and axes which they had formerly held in their hand. This was an immense stride onwards in the progress of art, even though at first the handle was attached to the head by means of thongs of skin. The art of boring circular holes, not only in timber but in stone also, followed soon after, and then the handle was inserted into a hole or socket in the head itself. Several such implements have been found, if not in the immediate neighbourhood of Kinnord, at least within the district of Cromar.

But of all improvements in the arts that were effected at this early stage, none was so important as that of polishing stone. The man who discovered this was in his day and generation almost as great a benefactor of his species as he who invented the steam engine. From the period when men learned to polish their stone tools may be dated the rise of all handicraft. An edge could thus be obtained on stone which for keenness was not surpassed for long after the introduction of metal implements. This improvement, however, does not seem to have been taken much advantage of so far

north as Kinnord, till shortly before the bronze age ; for very few specimens of polished stone belonging to this early age are now found in the district.

Such being their tools, let us now see what they were able to accomplish with them : They felled the trees of the forest, which they converted into canoes, implements of husbandry, and other tools, with which they rolled together great stones for walls of defence. With the means at their command, they built great circular houses above ground, and strange pear-shaped ones under. In short, they contrived to make themselves almost comfortable and secure ; and when we consider what they achieved, it cannot be said that they were indolent, and did not make the most of their means.

To these simple stone tools were afterwards added bronze ones ; and, before the stage of civilization to which I am referring had come to a close, some little aid was also obtained from iron, though it was doubtless a very rare commodity at that time.

There is reason to believe that the colony at Kin-nord, leading such an existence as I have described, was one of the earliest and most populous north of the Grampians. The locality had, indeed, unusual attractions, possessing, as it did, the natural elements of security against enemies from without, and of food supply for the dwellers within. Naturally the earliest

settlers would select for their residence a locality where the necessaries of life could be obtained in the greatest abundance, and with the least toil ; and of these wood and water must have been the most essential. Both were here to be found in unusual store. Timber for the construction of their dwellings, and for fuel to warm them was at hand ; while the lakes and the forest would afford an unfailing supply of food. Irrespective, therefore, of the remains of antiquity which have been found in the district, there was a presumption in the very character of its situation that it must early have attracted attention as a place peculiarly favourable for a settlement.

In these very olden times the idea of a town, as known to us, had not been conceived. According to their notion a town embraced a little district, selected in the first instance for its natural facilities of defence, and afterwards fortified by art so as to afford protection, not only to the inhabitants, but to all their flocks and herds. The Romans were the first to describe these ancient British towns ; and from their accounts we gather that they were generally situated in woods in localities where lakes and marshes were abundant, and formed natural defences against invasion. In these lakes the natives built artificial islands, and palisaded those that nature had built, in order to render them safe retreats in case of defeat from an invading foe.

The lake-dwellers spent most of their time on the water—an element with which they had acquired great familiarity. Their aquatic feats much surprised the Romans, who at first took them for a sort of amphibious race of the human family, and believed they scarcely could be drowned.

But besides the water and marsh defences, they were also very fond of building *hill forts*, where the nature of the country afforded them facilities for so doing. The most prominent heights were selected for fortifications, and around these clustered the rude huts of the people ; just as in more recent times every castle was surrounded by a hamlet to which it afforded protection against assaults from foreign enemies. A collection of these hill-forts and lake retreats, occupied by the same people, and capable from their situations of affording help to each other, though scattered over a pretty wide extent of country, was in these early times esteemed a town.

Now the remains which still survive are sufficient to show that the country all around Kinnord was the headquarters of some great tribe of pre-historic settlers. The district thus formed into a town embraced the whole valley of the Burn of Dinnet, with probably a portion of that of the Burn of Tarland ; but the principal strength, or chief citadel was in and around Loch Kinnord. The town was not known by the name

Kinnord ; if the people used that word at their first settlement, they applied it to only a small portion of their fortified district—a portion which afterwards became important as it rose by degrees to be the principal fortress. The name which the inhabitants themselves bestowed on the city was DAVAN, or the land or town of *the two lakes*, a name which it must be allowed was, and even yet is, very descriptive of the situation ; for these two lakes, now called Davan and Kinnord, though greatly modified in shape and extent from what they then were, still form the principal feature of the scenery. From this circumstance then they called their town DAVAN, or the *Town of the Two Lakes*. The tribe, whose principal city this was, occupied an extensive territory, mostly at first along the banks of the Dee. They called themselves *Dealich*, or as we should say *Deeside men*.

Possessing such an advantageous situation for their capital, they in time succeeded in bringing under subjection their less favoured neighbours, till at length their territories extended over the whole valleys of the Dee and Don, and, as some think, along the sea coast from the mouths of these rivers almost to where Peterhead now stands.

It may be thought that the town of *Davan*, as we shall now call it, did not occupy a very central position for being the chief town of such a people ; but it must

be recollect that they did not then select sites for their cities in the most central localities, but at first for purposes of defence, and long after for those of commerce. Even so late, comparatively, as when chief towns were chosen for counties, little regard was paid to central situation, as may be seen from the selection of Aberdeen, Banff, and many others of the county towns of Scotland. In the much earlier times to which we are referring, the natural defences of mountain and flood were of more consequence.







Chapter IV.

PRE-HISTORIC PERIOD,

TO 1000 A.D.

PERHAPS it may be asked, if there was such a very great town here, ought we not to find more extensive ruins of it than the district now exhibits ? But we have to remember that the structures raised by a rude and savage people are peculiarly liable to become obliterated. Their common dwellings were mere huts, generally of turf or timber, and even their stone buildings were uncemented by lime or mortar, and readily fell into shapeless ruins, while the materials of which they were composed, being selected stones, were much valued by the modern mason and dyker, and consequently carried away in great quantities for the construction of neighbouring houses and dry stone walls. Add to this that the very sites of many of these old habitations must have disappeared in the course of the reclaiming of waste lands which modern farmers

have carried on so vigorously of late years; and little surprise need be felt that not more of these ruins still survive to mark the site of this pre-historic city. More, however, are still extant than the casual visitor may fancy.

Let him plant himself on the summit of the Mickle Ord, and restore in imagination the hill forts whose foundations and ruins are still traceable within view of his position, each with its attendant outworks and hamlet, and a feeling of astonishment at their number and magnitude, rather than one of disappointment that so few remain, is likely to fill his mind. If these old ruins were restored to their pristine forms, beginning at the upper end of the valley on the slopes of Morven, his eye might discern in the distance three clusters of buildings, with a round tower in each, and a great central tower, the ruins of which are now known as the Blue Cairn, overtopping the others, and forming a conspicuous object on the mountain side. As he carries his eye round the head of the valley, clusters of buildings and smaller towers meet his view in close succession, till it is arrested by an immense pile on the summit of the most commanding eminence in this direction. This is the Knock soul or *View Fort* of the ancient city. A smaller tower on a humbler knoll to the east is succeeded on the next eminence by the great fort on this side, whose ruins were long known as Cairnmore, or *great cairn*, though nothing but the name and the faint

outline of the surrounding trench now remain.* Other two knolls, rising at short intervals towards the south-east are also crowned with forts and encircled with numerous dwellings. Then follows a hollow containing a lake, but hid from view by an elevated ridge called *Licklies hill*, which has three forts on prominent points, and bristles with other buildings which continue in an easterly direction till another massive pile meets the view, the remains of which were also called the *Cairnmore*. All round these remains almost every rood of uncultivated ground contains the outlines of ancient circular foundations. Carrying the eye still eastward, over the more elevated ridge of the Whitehill, other two towers appear, crowning its chief summits, while almost in line with the more easterly, but farther to the south, and nearer the beholder, the Knockhill and its two neighbouring heights have each its strength, while here, even more densely and extensively than at Cairnmore, are the foundations of other structures traceable. The highest summit in this direction is Knockargetty, or *The Treasure Hill*. Here the Public Treasury was kept, and the situation was defended by three concentric lines of circumvallation, flanked right and left by two

* From these ruins a farm steading, a hamlet, and several miles of stone dykes were built before the foundations, still of great extent, were cleared away, and the site converted into arable land.

strong forts on either hand, the ruins of which still remain in the cairns at Leys and the blue cairns of Ruthvan, while the rear was guarded by a line of forts, not, however, within view, crowning the Drummy ridge towards the north-east. Carrying the eye still farther southward, it is next arrested by the huge pile that crowns the summit of the Mulloch Hill, and the view being now nearer, a whole colony, or suburban town, is discernible around the Lake of Knockice (*the Hill of the Loch*) and the heights, seven in number, that bound it in a semicircle are seen to be surmounted by strong forts, communicating with each other and with the numerous hamlets on the slopes below them by means of walled roadways, and these again similarly connected with the central district between Lochs Davan and Kinnord. The knoll to the south of Knockice, overlooking the valley of the Dee, is surmounted by a strong fort and encumbered with lesser structures. This is the *Tomachaillich*, or hill to which the women were sent in times of danger. Casting the eye now along the slopes to the south of the Dee, the first object that attracts attention is a very strong fort on the summit of the ridge that separates the Dee and Tanar valleys. This strength was called *Bal ruadh Ri*, now corrupted into Balrory—that is, the *King's Red Fort*. Farther to the west is another suburban colony, with its fortress and other defences. This is now called

Tillycairn ; and, judging from the numerous cairns still visible there, and the relics of antiquity that have from time to time been found in these ruins, it must have been an extensive and important settlement. Doubtless the Dee flowed between it and the central strength at Kinnord, but there was a good ford in the river, with a fort guarding the entrance on either side ; that on the north being especially strong, whence a fortified road led towards the *Garradh dun Aun* of the loch. The fort at the ford was called *Dun n'ath*, that is *The Fort of the Ford*, which name has now been transformed into Dinnet. When so many canoes, great and small, were plying on the lakes, it is but reasonable to think that there was also abundant means for crossing the river at seasons when the ford could not be taken. For this purpose, as well as for the sake of the fishings, there can be no doubt that the large boat pool of Dinnet had a fleet of craft suitable for the trade there carried on. Let our supposed beholder now turn his attention in the direction of the slopes of Culblean to the north-west, and he may discern in the midst of the dense forest that covered its base and sides, two, if not more, populous settlements, each with its protecting forts. One of these extends from the Burn of the Vat northwards to the shores of Loch Davan, the other is still farther north on the slopes of the Lump of Culblean.

The valley is thus seen to be encircled with forts and outposts, great and small, each having its hamlet of more or less importance. The bottom of the hollow so encircled was occupied by mosses, marshes, lochs, and dense thickets of alder, birch, and willow—the principal hunting ground of the inhabitants, where the wild boar and his family found their winter retreat ; and the deer and the wild cattle devoured the rank vegetation.

But the strongest position of all is in and around the two lakes. The beholder we have supposed as surveying this scene might fancy himself seated on the dry-stone battlements of the fort that crowned the Mickle Ord ; at his feet and around the slopes on all sides are the circular huts and enclosures of the natives, while the lake, of which his position commands a bird's eye view, is swarming with vessels of many kinds and sizes, from the great *Man of War* canoe 33 feet long, hollowed out of a single oak, with its full complement of marines, to the little skiff with its single rower. On its surface appear two islands, the larger natural but strongly palisaded round and round, and forming an impregnable strength in any mode of warfare then known ; the other wholly artificial, and raised by an immense expenditure of labour, doubtless to give increased accommodation and security as the city grew in importance and population. Besides these two islands, which might be called the inner citadels of the town, a

great peninsula, called Garadh dunh' Aun, or *Strong Fort of the Water*—a name now corrupted into *Gar-dieben*—was also converted into an island strength by means of a large canal cut across the narrow isthmus. The access was protected on the inside by a rampart, and on the land side by heavy stone works, the foundations of which were discovered a few years ago. On the summit of the Little Ord, on the opposite side of the lake, there is another building—whether a fort or not is not certain, probably a place of worship—and on the shores of Loch Davan, hid from view by the Little Ord, there are two clusters of hamlets with the lake as their fishing ground. At the eastern end of the Ord there is a large extent of ground densely covered with huts and buildings, arranged in winding streets or disposed in crescents. This populous part is seen to be connected with the outlying settlement at Knockice by the sunk roadway already referred to, which continues its course to the shores of Loch Kinnord opposite the artificial island. The western end of the Little Ord presents a busy scene; for it was there that the *Al*, or Altar place, was situated, while around it clustered the habitations of the priests, Druids probably, and the schools and abodes of their students and attendants.*

* This place was originally called Al-Kinnord, which meant the *Promontory or Rock of Sacrifice*, and answers well to such a descriptive appellation. The name has now been converted into Auld

The above description of the great Pictish town of Davan is doubtless imaginary ; but in filling up the picture not a single detail has been gratuitously assumed ; the buildings have only been raised upon ruins or remains that are still visible ; of hundreds of others that beyond doubt have been wholly obliterated by the improvements of the modern agriculturist, no account has been taken. But if we restore only those buildings of which the traces and foundations still remain, it is impossible not to see that in some pre-historic age there must have been here a strongly fortified centre of a large and busy population—in short, a great ancient city.

How long it remained so it would be rash to conjecture ; but there are not wanting evidences that it was visited by the hostile Roman legions, probably those under the command of the Emperor Severus, (208 A.D.) These Romans certainly about this period passed near to the city of Davan, which, according to a custom of theirs, they latinized into Davana, or Devana ; and not being able to pronounce the Celtic name of the people, *Deailich*, they gave it the nearest sound they could, and called them Taixales. Whether the Romans completely defeated the Deailich or Taixales and utterly

Kinnord, and often through an affectation of English even into Old Kinnord, for neither of which is there the smallest reason apparent either in the history or topography of the locality.

destroyed their city of Devana, we have no means of ascertaining for certain, but that the town received a crushing blow from them there is every reason to believe. That they even made themselves masters of it is almost beyond a doubt, because both weapons of war and articles of household use of Roman manufacture have been recovered from the bottom of the lake ; and there is still current a tradition that a great battle was fought between the Britons and the Romans near Knockice. On the whole, the probability is that after being captured by these victorious foreigners the town never regained its former importance, but gradually sank into decay.*

* As to the site of the ancient city of Devana, the learned and accurate antiquary and historian, William F. Skene, LL.D., in his "History of Ancient Alban"—Vol. i. p. 74—writes :—"Farther north along the coast, and reaching from the mountain chain of the Mounth to the Moray Firth, were the 'Taexali,' who gave their name to the headland now called Kinnaird's Head. Their town, Devana, is placed by Ptolemy in the Strath of the Dee, near the Pass of Ballater, and close to Loch Daven, where the remains of a native town are still to be seen, and in which the name of Devana seems yet to be preserved." In a foot note on the same page he adds :—"All editions (*i.e.*, of Ptolemy) agree in placing Devana in the interior of the country at a distance of at least thirty miles from the coast. Its identity with the seaport of Aberdeen rests upon the authority of Richard of Cirencester alone."

Elsewhere (vol. i. p. 64, Note) the same author writes that "he has collated for his work the Latin editions (of Ptolemy) of 1482, 1486, 1520, 1522, 1525, 1535, with the Greek editions of 1605, 1619,

A long, long night of darkness and silence now overshadowed Kinnord, broken only by a little star-light that shone through the gloom when the Christian religion was introduced among this ancient people. What share they had in the conflicts with the conquering Scots, who came from Ireland into Scotland, much as the Normans long after came from France into England, with the view of establishing themselves as the aristocracy of the country, we have no certain intelligence ; we only know that if they came into collision the Picts must have ultimately gone down before their more civilized invaders.

Sometime between the years 550 and 600 A.D. the Christian religion was first preached to the rude natives. Around their miserable hamlets lay scattered the moss-covered ruins of their ancient city ; but the life of the place—the busy population—was gone ; and all connected with them, now an old world story, was fast becoming a myth and a legend. The new religion, by obliterating all traces of the ancient idolatry, did much to accelerate the decay of any lingering tradition of heathenish greatness that might still be clinging to their

and with Wilbery's edition." The conclusion therefore, that the ancient Devana of the Romans was situated within the district of Loch Kinnord, is one which, on quite a different line of evidence from that followed in the present work, has the support of the highest living authority on such matters.

memories. One mode which the disciples of Columba adopted to effect this purpose was to seize possession of the sacred places as sites for the Christian Churches they planted. They did this at Kinnord, setting up, on the site of the ancient *Al*, a great stone on which the priests carved a curiously wrought cross, as the emblem of the new Faith, to mark the place where the Christian converts should henceforth meet to worship ; for as yet they mostly met in the open air. This stone may still be seen within the policies of Aboyne Castle, whither it was removed about 60 years ago for greater security, and more careful preservation.

By-and-by the people built a church on the sacred promontory of Kinnord, which they now called the *Claggan* or *Clachan* ; or as we should say the *Kirktown*; and thus it was hoped the recollection of the heathenish *Al* would be effaced. But there are few things more difficult to blot out of the memory of a people than names of places, when they have once been firmly established by long usage. Both names still survive, the more modern, or Christian, with little change, though its significance has been quite forgotten ; the older or heathenish, sadly corrupted into *Auld*, or, as already stated, even *Old* Kinnord, which curiously enough it is, though in a sense not intended by the corruption.

With the exception of this little star-light glimpse—

by means of which we get a momentary glance, dim enough, of an important ecclesiastical change—the long night of silence and darkness remains unbroken for 500 years more. During these long ages the old ruins got hoary, moss-covered, and grey. The people could not understand what they were the relics of, but concluded they must contain treasure; and so they were rifled again and again, and thus turned into shapeless cairns, in which condition they have ever since remained, unless when the mason and stone dyker have pillaged them for the erection of modern works.

We have now reached what may be called the close of the pre-historic record; and when the light again appears all the old grandeur of Davan and Kinnord was completely forgotten. Need we be surprised then that, after 800 years of desolation and oblivion of the past, so few relics should remain of this ancient city? It required the practised eye of an antiquarian traveller to discover in the green mounds on the banks of the Tigris the ruins of the ancient palaces of Nineveh. Of the most populous region of the kingdom of Israel, a recent traveller remarks:—"Nature has resumed her quiet reign over the hill of Jezreel. All is silent and desolate now; Baal and his worshippers have passed away, and so have the calves of Bethel and of Dan, and the very memory of these events and their actions has departed from the land. There are only two boats

now on the sea of Galilee ; there is no town now on its shores, and no ruins save the scattered brick pavements of ancient Tiberias. Yet this lake was in our Saviour's days one of the busiest scenes in Palestine, with a dozen or more flourishing towns on its shores, gay palaces giving to it the air of wealth and splendour, and a thriving traffic enlivening its waters."* When we reflect that these towns and palaces were structures raised with the highest arts of architecture, while the round towers of ancient Devana were the rudest efforts of that art, the wonder is not that so few, but that so many, relics of its former greatness should still survive.

* Dr. M'Leod.







Chapter V.

EARLY HISTORIC PERIOD,

TO 1335 A.D.

ERE this period opens on Kinnord, many important political changes had taken place in the history of the country. The different provinces, long petty independent kingdoms, had, one after another, been incorporated into a united nation. The invasions of the Danes, though mostly confined to the coast, had been heard of far inland, and the reports of their deeds of arms, their savage cruelties and sacrileges, had filled the native mind with fear and horror, and given rise to fables that attributed every ruin and trace of devastation to these pirates ; and hence arose, as far as I can conjecture, the elements of the tradition that, in quite recent times, referred to the Danish wars the great cairns and ruins to be found on the bleak moors and hill tops around Loch Kinnord. But the times of the Danes

had also passed away, and other disturbers of the country's peace had put them almost out of people's memories.

When these events had come and gone, a great revolution, with which I think Kinnord was associated, swept over the land. In the year 1039, King Duncan, "the Generous," was murdered by one of his great lords, or thanes, of the name of Macbeth. When this Macbeth, who was a descendant of the ancient Pictish kings, got full possession of the kingdom, he resorted to the old Pictish practice of having round forts on the hill tops, and inaccessible strengths in the marshes and lakes. He built a great round fortress on the top of the hill of Dunsinane, and restored others in different parts of his dominions, such as at Lumphanan, Strathbogie, and I think it very likely at Kinnord also, because he was fond of such strengths, and resided much in this part of his territories. Macbeth was a sort of Oliver Cromwell in his day, and was a good king for the country, though very cruel to the late king's family and followers, all of whom he killed that he could lay his hands on. However, Malcolm, the eldest son, managed to escape into England, whence he returned after seventeen years, accompanied with a great army, gave battle to Macbeth at his great fort of Dunsinane, beat him, and chased him north over the hills to the Peel-Bog in Lumphanan. Here the fugitive made

another stand ; but Macduff, Malcolm's chief general, overcame him, slew him with his own hand, and carried his head in triumph to the King, who was staying at Kincardine O'Neil. This was that Malcolm who was nicknamed Ceanmore, or the *Big-headed*, because, as I suppose, he had a large head, perhaps, also, because he was a very shrewd and wise king. Malcolm Ceanmore, being now crowned king, took possession of all the strongholds which Macbeth had built or fortified, Kinnord among the others, and likely enough garrisoned them with his own soldiers. Notwithstanding all the legends that have got into circulation regarding this King's residence at Kinnord, the above is the only account, consistent with history, that I can give of any supposed connection he had with it. If there was a habitable castle or fort on the island at this time (1057-93), it was more likely to have been built, or rebuilt, by Macbeth, in whose veins there was a great deal of both Pictish and Danish blood, than by Malcolm, whose big head had got filled with English notions and new fashions, among which round towers on hill tops and crannogs in lakes had no place. I shall, therefore, not detain the reader with any traditions about Malcolm Ceanmore's residence and doings at Kinnord, because I believe most, if not all, of them to be purely fabulous inventions of comparatively modern times, and ignorant people. I may just remark that the reign of Malcolm

introduced a new era into our history ; and it became customary, a hundred years ago or so, for people to refer all relics and legends of unknown antiquity to the period of his reign.

As a flash of lightning in a dark night enables the belated wanderer to behold for an instant the position he occupies, so in the midst of the uncertainties of these researches, an actual date cut upon a beam, brought up from the ruins of the old drawbridge, about the year 1782, fixes for us the year in which this ancient fortress was presumably restored after its long desolation. The beam, according to the writer of the Old Statistical Account of the parish, was long preserved by a gentleman in the neighbourhood, but has now ceased to exist. The date it bore was 1113. This was just twenty years after the death of Malcolm Ceannmore. The date is important, as being the earliest written or inscribed item of information we possess regarding the fortress on Loch Kinnord. If we inquire into the state of the country at that time, we find that Alexander I., sur-named "The Fierce," son of Malcolm Ceanmore, was then engaged in restoring the forts and strongholds in the northern parts of his kingdom to overawe the turbulent inhabitants of Moray and the Mearns ; and it is not improbable that, among others, he may have rebuilt the castle in Loch Kinnord. At any rate we are now at the year 1113 A.D.

Another dark age of nearly two hundred years' duration has to be passed over before we reach the next fact of history having reference to Kinnord. When it again emerges to view, it is as the scene of a night encampment of a great English army, towards the fall of the year 1296. Noise and bustle there were enough then—pitching of tents, picketing of horses, hurrying to and fro on the moor of Dinnet of servants and attendants, for the great English king, Edward I., contemptuously nicknamed by the Scots, *Longshanks*, was there at the head of his army, probably passing the night on the Castle Island. Why he and his army were there was thus:—He was engaged in subduing poor Scotland, and for this purpose had made a progress through the country as far north as Kinloss in Morayshire. On his return journey he came by Lochindorb, Strathspey, and Kildrummy, then by far the greatest strength in the province of Mar. From Kildrummy he led his army southward, encamping the first night at Kinnord,* and early next morning crossing the Dee at Boat of Dinnet, whence long files of his soldiers wended their way through Glentanar, and over the Fir Munth, and so on by Brechin to Dundee.

* While here Edward caused the Peel or Castle of Aboyne to be taken in, and its charter-chest to be rifled, carrying with him into England every document that would seem to imply the independence of the Scottish king or kingdom.—*Robertson's Index to Missing Charters*, p. xxv.

This was not the last time that the great King *Longshanks* was at Kinnord. In 1303, after Wallace's brave effort to secure the independence of his country had failed, Edward made another progress through the country, selecting almost the same route and encampments as on the previous occasion ; but, being this time in very bad humour with what he called the rebellious spirit of the Scots, the people about Kinnord were very glad he did not stay longer amongst them.

At the present day we can hardly realise the fact of a great English army, with their king at their head, being twice encamped, within the space of seven years, around the shores and on the island of Loch Kinnord—the spot seems to us so very unlikely to be selected for such a purpose ; but time works wondrous changes ; then it was the most likely, the most commodious and convenient between Kildrummy and Brechin.

To make clear to the reader the circumstances out of which arose the next event in which the Castle of Kinnord figures, it will be necessary to sketch, however briefly, some portion of the national history following closely on the period at which we have now arrived.

John Strathbogie, Lord of that Ilk, had married Adda, daughter and sole heiress of Henry Hastings, Earl of Athole, in whose right, on her father's death, he became eighth Earl of Athole. Taking part with Wallace, he was made prisoner by the English, and put

to death with horrible cruelty. His son, David, ninth Earl of Athole, and Lord of Strathbogie, wavered in his allegiance between Bruce and Edward ; but at last marrying Joan Comyn, daughter and co-heiress of the Red Comyn, whom Bruce had slain at Dumfries, he went over altogether to the English cause. In consequence of this he was disinherited by King Robert ; and his lordship of Strathbogie was bestowed upon his former friend, Sir Adam Gordon. David Strathbogie, who had immense estates in England as well as in Scotland, made no serious effort to recover the latter, and died in England, leaving a son of his own name, a bold, fickle, and inordinately ambitious young man.

He and some other Scottish exiles had influence enough with the English king to obtain from him a fleet and army with which they invaded Scotland, with the design of regaining by force their forfeited estates and honours, and of dispossessing the present owners. The great Bruce was now dead, and they proposed expelling his son, as yet a young boy, from the throne, and setting up in his room David Baliol, the son of a former king. They thought that if they could do this they would not only repossess themselves of their forfeited properties, but be secured in the possession of them in all time coming. They were very nearly successful ; and for two or three years they kept the country in a state of civil war.

David Strathbogie had, through his mother, Joan Comyn, inherited the greater part of the fortunes and territorial influence of her once powerful family, and thinking that the former vassals of her house would more readily join his standard if he came among them as the representative of their former lords, he dropped the surname of Strathbogie, and, assuming that of his mother when in Scotland, called himself David Comyn, though his real name, that which he always took when in England, was David Strathbogie.

Perceiving after a short time, that the Scots would never have Baliol for their king, Comyn, as we shall call him, suddenly changed sides in the contest, and made his peace with the followers of Bruce, receiving back the earldom of Athole with the lands belonging to it, and many others besides. He appears to have adopted this line of conduct in pursuance of a deep laid plan to make himself King of Scotland; and, indeed, if the family of Bruce could have been dispossessed and the family of Baliol rejected, he had the next best claim to the crown. He won over a great many of the Scottish nobility, rode through the country with a train almost royal, appointing his own friends to the command of the castles and forts within his wide domains, but all the while pretending that he was doing so in the interests of King David Bruce. The Castle, or Peel of Kinnord he gave to one of his most

staunch supporters, Sir Robert Menzies, who had considerable estates in Athole and also at Pitfodels, near Aberdeen. He was careful to keep on good terms with the Regent, the brave and loyal Sir Andrew Moray, though there was no man in Scotland he in his heart hated or dreaded more.

When he thought his plans ripe for execution, he threw off his disguise, mustered his followers in Athole, numbering 3000 foot with some horse, and seizing the opportunity when the Regent was engaged on some business on the eastern border, he hastily marched northward with this force to capture the Castle of Kildrummy, where the Regent's wife, a sister of the late King Robert Bruce, and other royal and noble ladies were then residing. The garrison was brave, but few in numbers ; and it is almost a wonder that it was able to resist Athole's unexpected attack. If it had surrendered he would have got into his hands almost every member of the Royal Family then resident within the kingdom ; for the young king was in France, and the youthful Stewart, the heir apparent, he had already secured.

Christian Bruce, however, found means to despatch a messenger to her husband, who, as has been said, was on the Borders, to inform him of the danger that threatened his family. We may fancy with what consternation and anger the brave Sir Andrew received the

intelligence of Athole's perfidy. But there was not a moment to be lost in unavailing grief and indignation. Hastily collecting 800 brave Border horsemen, among whom was Sir Alexander Gordon, the son and successor of Sir Adam, to whom Bruce had given Athole's patrimony of Strathbogie, he hurried northward with all possible speed. Comyn, hearing of his approach, and fearing a surprise, raised the seige of the Castle, intending either to give the regent battle at a distance from Kildrummy, where he could not receive succour from the garrison, or where, if he found it necessary, he might make good his retreat into Athole.

The subsequent events cannot be better told than by paraphrasing, for the sake of the modern reader, the narrative of the ancient chronicler, Wynton, whose account is so exact and minute that he must have had his information from an eye-witness.

When Sir Andrew Moray heard how rudely Earl Davy (Athole) and his men conducted themselves he was very angry, and prepared to raise the seige forthwith. He therefore collected all the armed men he could obtain to the south of the Scottish Sea (Firth of Forth). The Earl Patrick (Dunbar) joined him, and with him came Ramsay and Preston, and other gentlemen of great renown. William Douglass was also there with his good men and worthy, besides other gentlemen, making in all 800 fighting men; for the

flower of that portion of Scotland were then at his Court. So quick were their movements that they passed the Mounth (Grampians) without stopping.

The Earl Davy (Athole) now received full information of their approach, and so took his departure from the Castle (of Kildrummy). He made straight for Culblean, and there lodged his great array, right in the highway at the east end ; and right opposite to where they lay, at the Ha' of Logie-Ruthvan, Sir Andrew had taken up his quarters. That evening there came to him from Kildrummy 300 "wicht" and hardy men, and this raised the spirits of his own men greatly, and he himself was very glad of their coming.

Well, there was in his army one John of the Craig (John Craig), who had been taken prisoner by Earl Davy, and who would have to pay his ransom next day. This man said privately to the (Scottish) Lords, that, if they would take his advice, he would lead them by a short cut through the wood in which their foes lay, and bring them close up to them behind before they would be aware of their approach ; and he fulfilled all that he undertook ; for between midnight and daybreak he led them where they found the short cut which they followed for more than a mile. Skirting the wood there were two paths ; the Earl Davy lay in the lower of these, while the Scots took the higher way, and then struck across to the other. Here every man left his horse,

and marched against the foe on foot. These had no knowledge of their approach till well on in the dawn, when they caught sight of them. And then with all the haste they could they warned Earl Davy.

He immediately caused the trumpet to be sounded to warn his soldiers, who in a very short time assembled round him in a small path that was there. Right in the centre of this path stood Earl Davy, and to a great stone that stood beside it,

“He sayd, ‘Be Goddies face we twa,
The flight on us sall samen ta.’”
(By thee I stand, and take my oath
The flight together we take both.)

or,

(“Come one, come all, this rock shall fly
From its firm base as soon as I.”)

—*Scott.*

William Douglas, who then led the vanguard with the stoutest men that were in the company, when he saw Earl Davy stand so arrayed with his men, took his spear in both hands, and, holding it across, said—“Stay, my Lords, a moment.” They that were in his company secretly grumbled at this.

When Earl Davy saw that they hesitated, he stepped forward, and cried—“They are already nearly discomfited; upon them with might and main.”

After this they withdrew a little bit to a ford, which when Douglas saw, he cried—“Now is our time.”

Soon after, they couched their spears and charged in the ford. Robert Brady, a hardy knight, was there slain. A hand-to-hand encounter then took place ; and just at that moment Sir Andrew Moray with his company came in stoutly on the flank—so stoutly that they say the bushes bent before them. The moment he appeared the enemy fled ; not a single soldier remained to combat.

There by an oak was Earl Davy slain, and several of his followers ; Sir William Comyn was also slain ; and Sir Thomas Brown was taken prisoner, and afterwards heavily ironed ; for it seems they bore him no good will. Sir Robert Menzies went to his Castle of Kinnord, where he had never been till then ; but he escaped there and in the great fort, or Peel, he found good protection for himself and his men, and then on the following day he capitulated, and pledged his fidelity to the Scottish cause.

There were not many slain in battle ; for the wood covered them from their pursuers, and they fled so quickly that the greater part got safely away. The battle took place on St. Andrews day (30th November, 1335), or as I reckon on the previous night (and morning).

Wynton gives us to understand that the battle of Culblean had been the subject of poetry or prophecy, for he adds :—" Of this battle spake Thomas of Ercly-

down (Thomas the Rhymer), when he truly said—‘In Culblean they'll meet, stalwart, stark, and stern.’”

“He said it in his prophecy,
But how he knew it was a fairly *.”

“Thus perished,” says a very exact historian,† “in the 28th year of his age, David de Strathbogie, of royal descent, nobly allied, and possessing estates above the rank of a subject. He died, seized of the manors of Gainsborough in Lincolnshire, Bullindon in Buckinghamshire, Posewyke, West Lexham, Styvely, and Holkham in Norfolk, Mitford Castle, and other lands in Northumberland. He married Catherine, daughter of Henry Beaumont, styled Earl of Buchan ; she survived him and was blockaded in the Castle of Lochindorb, by Sir Andrew Moray, from November 1335 (immediately after the battle of Culblean), to August 1336, when the siege was raised by Edward III. of England.”

Another version of the battle of Culblean represents that David Comyn, or Strathbogie, fell by the hand of Sir Alexander Gordon, who had a heavy account of injury to revenge ; and that when Sir Robert Menzies escaped to the Peel of Loch Kinnord, he was pursued thither by Sir Alexander, and besieged in the island fortress. Sir Robert having previously taken care to have all the boats on the lake secured, in order that if he were obliged to seek safety in the island, his pur-

* Marvel. † *Douglas's Peerage of Scotland.*

suers might not have the means of assaulting the Castle, Sir Alexander Gordon quickly set his men to cut down timber and construct rafts, on which they transported themselves to the island, stormed the Castle, and put the whole garrison to the sword.

This may be an exaggerated account of what took place ; but there is probably some truth in it, though Wynton's narrative is the only one to which entire historical credibility must be accorded. Where the other is supplementary, it also may be true ; but where contradictory, it must be rejected ; and it is certain that Sir Robert Menzies was not put to death, whatever was the fate of his followers.

The consequences of the battle of Culblean were of the most important kind. David, Earl of Athole, was supposed to be more than a match for the whole Scottish party. In close alliance with the English king, who aided and abetted him in his attempt to secure the crown of Scotland, he seemed to want but the victory at Culblean to secure his object. His slaughter there quenched for ever the hopes of his followers, and did more to strengthen the cause of David Bruce than any other action in the long and disastrous war that arose on the death of the great Bruce. Had David Comyn been successful, and Sir Andrew Moray defeated and slain, the House of Stuart would never have ascended the throne ; for Comyn had al-

ready made sure of the submission of the young Stuart, the heir apparent of the line of Bruce ; and we should have had a Royal House of Comyn, or Strathbogie, with such destiny as Providence might have allotted to it. The battle of Culblean turned the apparently unequal contest, and gave us the fortunes which history records.

What befell the "Peel" or Castle of Loch Kinnord subsequent to the battle of Culblean can only be conjectured. It is about 150 years before its name again appears in any written document that has survived to our day. There is reason, however, to believe, that the fort was neither demolished nor disused ; and the silence of the chroniclers regarding it may in great part be accounted for by the fact that for the rest of the 14th century the scene of the events which almost exclusively claimed their attention was laid on the distant Borders.





Chapter VI. HISTORIC PERIOD,

TO 1400 A.D.

WHILE then the national history is occupied in recording a desultory warfare with the English, let us take a glance at the proprietary history of the district in which Loch Kinnord is situated ; for it is presumable, though not certain, that the lords of the manor were also the captains of the chief stronghold.

The earliest proprietors of whom we have any certain knowledge were the Bysets, or Bissets, barons of Aboyne. How long they had enjoyed possession of these lands before their name appears in the old charters cannot now be known ; but being of Norman descent it is not probable that they came into Scotland before the reign of David I. (1124-53). And it was likely sometime after this before they became barons of Aboyne. By the year 1242 they had become a very

powerful family in Scotland, and the chieftainship seemed to rest in Walter Bisset, Lord of Aboyne. For some time a feud had existed between him and Patrick Galloway, Earl of Athole, who in the same year was burnt in his lodgings in Haddington. Although Walter Bisset proved that at the time of the fire he was entertaining the Queen, Joanna, at his Castle of Aboyne, where she had honoured him with a visit, and whom he had escorted as far as Forfar on her way south, he did not escape the suspicion of having instigated his followers to set fire to the lodgings of Athole. The end of it was that he was obliged to take refuge in England, where the Queen's brother, Henry III., protected him from his enemies in Scotland.

Although they were declared "forfeit," the lands of Aboyne did not pass out of the hands of his family. As we have seen, the charter chest of Aboyne was rifled by Edward I. in 1296, and its contents carried off to England. We can understand why Edward was so anxious to secure these charters. Bisset, in order to be avenged on his Scottish foes, among whom he even included the King, had represented to the English sovereign that the crown of Scotland was a fief of that of England, and that there was evidence of this in the ancient charters. This was just the point that Edward was anxious to establish; and Bisset's own charters were likely to afford the evidence required.

Another Walter Bisset had a charter from King Robert Bruce of the lands of "Aboyne, in the county of Aberdeen." We do not know whether this was a son of Old Walter, the exile, or not ; but the Bissets had good family reasons for taking the side of Bruce against the Galloways, who were the kinsfolk and abettors of the Baliols.

At this time there were a great many small lairds on Deeside, as elsewhere in Scotland. These held their lands on charters from greater lairds, or barons ; and these, again, from still greater ; while the greatest of all, or Lord Superior of the district, held directly of the Crown. Of this last class were the Bissets of Aboyne. In time of war they could have called out the whole military force of the Parishes of Glenmuick, Tullich, Glentanar, Aboyne, Birse, and the greater part of Strachan and Durris.

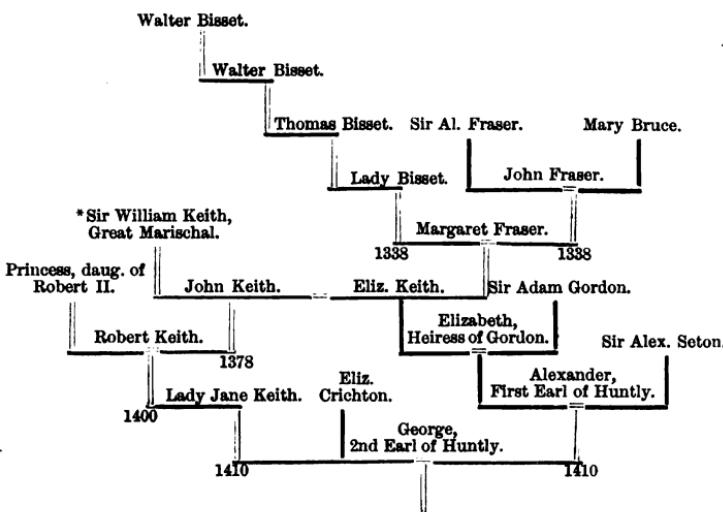
The last of this powerful family, who seems to have been a son of the last named Walter Bisset, was THOMAS BISSET, to whom David II granted a charter confirming to him the grants made to his ancestors of the lands of Aboyne. The line then terminated in an HEIRESS, who married JOHN FRASER, son of Sir Alexander Fraser and Mary Bruce, second sister of the great King Robert. This marriage, which took place soon after the battle of Culblean, brought the whole lordship of Aboyne into the house of Fraser, to remain there only for one generation.

The eldest daughter of John Fraser the Lady Margaret Fraser, married Sir William Keith, the great Marischal of Scotland, who received with her the "arrearage and annuels of Aboyne, with other large estates, particularly the Forest of Cowie, the thanedom of Durris, the baronies of Strauchan, Culperso, Johnstone, and many others in the counties of Aberdeen and Kincardine"—a princely "tocher," but then Lady Margaret had royal blood in her veins, and the house of Marischal was second to none in Scotland.

Sir William Keith and Margaret Fraser, his wife, had three sons and four daughters. The youngest daughter, the Lady Elizabeth Keith, married Sir Adam Gordon of Huntly ; and the eldest son, Lord JOHN KEITH, married a daughter of King Robert II. Here was another marriage into the Royal Family ; on which event the parents of the young bridegroom resigned in his favour a large portion of their estates, including the barony of Aboyne. He however died soon after, leaving an only son, ROBERT, who also died before his grandfather, leaving an only daughter, the Lady Jane Keith, who married ALEXANDER GORDON, first Earl of Huntly, and "brought to him a large estate," comprising, among others, "the lands of Cluny, Tulch (Tullich), Aboyn, Glentanyr, and Glenmuck," in Aberdeenshire. Subjoined is the genealogy of the proprietors of Kinnord, which was generally included in the barony of

Aboyne, till it came into the possession of the Huntly family :—

BARONY OF ABOYNE.



N.B.—The red lines represent the owners of the lands of Aboyne and Kinnord. Dates are noted where they seem important and can be approximately ascertained.

* In regard to the succession to the Aboyne property of JOHN KEITH, son of Sir William Keith and Margaret Fraser, it has to be observed that he was defrauded of his title to it by the Regent Albany and the Stewarts. Sir William and his Lady were *compelled* to grant charters of resignation, making over the greater part of their estates to this ruling or reigning family. I say *compelled* because it was most unlikely, being most unnatural that they should have voluntarily put their estates past their own children, and

It thus appears that the lordship, or barony, of Aboyne was in the family of the Bissets for at least three generations, probably four, that is about 100 years; that in the fourth or fifth generation it passed into the family of the Frasers, in which it remained for one generation, or about 30 years, passing in the second into the family of Keith, Earls Marischal, in which it remained two generations, or about 70 years, passing in the third into the family of Gordon, in which it is to be hoped it will always remain.

because these charters, when examined, are found to be attested only by coteries of this grasping faction and their minions. What are we to think of this one, for example, dated at Falkland, 18th May, 1407, conveying the barony of Aboyne out of the family of Sir William Keith to John Stewart, Earl of Buchan, in which it is provided that, failing Buchan's heirs, other two families of Stewarts, his uncles, and all their heirs, are to come into possession before the rightful heir shall have a claim on the property? This scandalous deed is attested by seven Stewarts, sons, brothers, and nephews of the beneficiary, without a single Keith or Fraser among the witnesses. No doubt John, Earl of Buchan, was a brave and accomplished knight; but that was no good reason why he should have taken other people's properties. He had already by another of these compulsory charters possessed himself of the baronies of Kincardine O'Neil and Coull; and he must needs have that of Aboyne also. At court he was styled "John O'Coull,"—an epithet, which, passing through several families, notably the Rosses, has survived to the present day. I have not included him in the above Chart; but have entered the rightful heir, to whom it was restored, when James I. returned from his captivity, and put an end to the rapacity of the house of Albany.



Chapter VII.

HISTORIC PERIOD,

TO 1630 A.D.

To return now to our account of Loch Kinnord. The lordship of Aboyne, with the lands pertaining thereto, including the Castle of Kinnord, came, as above shown, into possession of Alexander Gordon, 1st Earl of Huntly, through his marriage with Lady Jane Keith ; but there being no issue of this marriage, they would naturally have reverted to the family of the Earls Marischal, had the charter, or, as we should say the marriage contract, by which they were conveyed, not settled the succession in the family of Gordon. A charter, in confirmation of the above, is written in Latin, the literal translation of which is as follows :—“To Alexander, Earl of Huntly, and the descendants and heirs between said Alexander and Elizabeth (Crichton), Countess of Huntly (his second wife), born, or to be born ; whom

failing, to the true, legitimate, and nearest heirs whomsoever of the said Alexander, All and whole the lands of Cluny, Tulch (Tullich), Abyn, Glentanyr, and Glenmuck."

It was about this time (1448) that the Earl of Huntly transferred the principal seat of the family from Gordon in Berwickshire to Strathbogie in Aberdeenshire ; but it was many years before the family ceased to reside occasionally on their Border estates. Soon after taking up his residence at the Castle of Strathbogie, the Earl directed his attention to the improvement of his recently acquired Deeside property, which, having been long in the hands of non-resident owners, had fallen into considerable decay. The fortalice of Aboyne, in especial, which had remained untenanted since the last of the Bissets was there, had become uninhabitable ; and the fortress of Loch Kinnord, though less decayed, stood much in need of repairs. The latter he rebuilt, not so much as a stronghold as a hunting-seat ; and here he generally took up his residence when he visited Deeside. In this condition, serving the purposes of pleasure and the chase, the Castle of Loch Kinnord remained for the rest of the 15th century.*

* About the close of the 15th century, Elizabeth Sutherland married Adam Gordon, second son of the second Earl of Huntly, who then assigned to them the barony of Aboyne for their maintenance :

The family papers show that several important transactions took place here during this period. Some vassals attended the Earl to receive renewal of their feudal charters. Among others, Lauchlan Mackintosh, of Galowne, chief of the clan, sought an interview with his Lordship at "Lochteanmor," in the summer of 1497, to grant his bond of manrent, and take the oath of feudal vassalage.

but the fortalice was in so bad a state of repair, that instead of living there they took up their residence at "Ferrick" (Ferrar), where they had a house fitted up for their accommodation. Here they lived and brought up their family, and here was born to them Alexander, 1st Earl of Sutherland, of the name of Gordon. So great was their attachment to their Deesside residence at Ferrar, that even after the Countess was "infeoffed" (30th June 1515) in the Earldom of Sutherland—one of the richest in the north—she and her husband with their two surviving children, Alexander, Master of Sutherland, and John of "Tillichowdie" (their youngest son, Adam, on whom the barony of Aboyne had been settled, having fallen in the Battle of Pinkie without legitimate offspring) continued to reside there till their death. Of this worthy couple, the ancestors of a noble and illustrious line, their great-great-grandson, Sir Robert Gordon, the historian of the house of Sutherland, has left the following record :—"Elizabeth, Countess of Sutherland, a lady of great judgment, and great modesty, died September 1535, in *Aboyne*, and was buried there. Her husband Adam, Earl of Sutherland (by courtesy), a very provident, valiant, and wise man, died at Ferrack, in *Aboyne*, 17th March, 1537, and was buried beside the Countess." All this while the Earl of Huntly, brother of the Countess of Sutherland, had his summer residence in the neighbouring Castle of *Loch Kinnord*.

Seven years after this, in the lifetime of Alexander, third Earl of Huntly, the Castle of Loch Kinnord was destined to receive a royal visit under peculiar and rather romantic circumstances. James IV., one of the bravest and best beloved of the kings of the Stuart dynasty, was the soul of chivalry—a disposition which sometimes led him into rather Quixotic adventures, and at last proved his ruin. On one occasion, in the year 1504, some conversation having arisen between the King and his courtiers regarding his frequent visits to the shrine of Saint Duthoc in Tain, James undertook, whether as a bet or not is not quite evident, to accomplish the journey, attended only by a chamberlain and squire, for what seemed to them an incredibly small sum of money. It is strange that this freak should have furnished us with one of the clearest glimpses we have of Scottish life and manners at that period ; but so it is. Strict accounts had to be kept of every item of expenditure, that it might be seen whether the King had really accomplished what he had undertaken ; and these accounts have been preserved. On his journey north he lodged in the Castle of Kinnord on the night of the 4th October, 1504, and paid for everything he received. To Jacob Edmanistown he paid next morning for “ tursing (setting in order) the kingis doggis there, the sum of 14s. ;” and to a man for “ prefing the Don (wading before the king

through the river to show that it was fordable), 5s." It seems his Majesty was well satisfied with the entertainment he had received at the Castle of Loch Kinnord, for on his return from the north in the following month, he again took up his quarters there ; and paid to the boatman, for his trouble with him, 14s., and to Peter Crechtoun the sum of 5s., which "he gaif be the kingis command to ane blind man." We thus see the King did not scrimp either his munificence or his charity on the occasions of his visiting Loch Kinnord.

Little more than a year after this visit, the lands of Aboyn, Glenmuick, and Glentanner, with the "Pele" of Loch Kinnord, were by royal charter united, and incorporated into a free barony and earldom, to be called the "barony and Earldom of Huntly in all time to come." This charter is dated 12th January, 1505-6 ; and the object it had in view was to prevent these lands from following their present owners, and becoming attached to the earldom of Sutherland, should the wife of Adam Gordon succeed to that dignity, of which there was now a fair prospect.

In the year 1519, one of the vassals of Earl Alexander appeared at "lie pier of Lochtcanmor" to have presence of his lordship, and ask him for a renewal of his lands of Kinraigie, which, it would seem, the Earl, on account of same offence he had received, was not disposed to grant, and very haughtily refused him an

audience. Thereupon the vassal took legal advice, and procuring the services of a notary public, repaired to the end of the drawbridge, and there read his petition and claim. After some time Kinraigie came under the required bondage, and received a renewal of his leasehold.

The Earl of Huntly having married, in his old age, Lady Elizabeth Gray, the widow of Lord Glammis, a designing woman, she took care to secure for herself an ample jointure in case she should survive her lord. This jointure consisted of the Deeside estates, whereof she received a charter from her husband, dated 27th July, 1511, confirmed afterwards by Royal charter—19th July, 1515. She did survive him ; but having no relish for the state of widowhood, she again found connubial bliss with the Earl of Rothes, on whose youth she practised with success the same arts as she had employed on the age of Huntly. Loch Kinnord, with its castle, thus passed in life-rent to an avaricious and non-resident proprietrix, who cared for nothing but the rents. At her death these lands reverted to George, 4th Earl of Huntly, “the proudest, most powerful, and most ambitious of his race.” In the early part of his career he was altogether too great a potentate to look after the improvement of this outlying portion of his vast property. He lived at Court and controlled the affairs of the nation till the rising power of the Regent

Murray, the head of the reforming party, compelled him to retire to the north.

Here he set himself to repair all the old and decayed fortresses, and to build others, with the intention, as his enemies said, of setting up a Highland Principality to overawe the Government. Among others, the Castle of Loch Kinnord was restored to more than its former strength, and garrisoned with a body of the Earl's soldiers. For their spiritual welfare a chapel was built on the southern shore, near the place where the farmhouse of Mickle Kinnord now stands, and where the baptismal font may still be seen. In the chapel they worshipped, and in the consecrated ground around they buried their dead. Although the greater part of the site has now been converted into arable land, the older natives still remember the ruined walls and the green mounds.

It was a stirring time then at Loch Kinnord. Though we have no direct proof, this was in all probability the age when the great drawbridge and the prison on the smaller island were built ; and the castle on the larger, and other decayed buildings renovated and made fit for the reception of military. All this came to a sudden end when the plot—whatever it was—was nearly ripe for execution. The great Earl, as is well known, fell in the battle of Corrichie, 28th October, 1562 ; and an indictment of high treason was exhibited against him,

his estates and honours being therein declared forfeited to the Crown. This decree did not much trouble his son and successor, who inherited not a little of his father's talents and ambition; because it depended on the issue of the struggle in which he was engaged, as a leader of the party called *Queen's Men*, whether it should have any effect at all. During the time he held the earldom (1562-76), the fort of Loch Kinnord falls quite out of view. It probably still maintained a small garrison to keep Highland cattle lifters somewhat in check.

George, 6th Earl and 1st Marquis of Huntly, having succeeded to the estates and honours of the earldom when a minor, the management of the property and the leadership of the clan devolved on his uncle, Sir Adam Gordon—the terror of his enemies, and the hero of many a ballad, as the famous “Edom o' Gordon.” It is not likely that under his regency any strength of the family would have been allowed to fall into decay. We may therefore be very sure that the “Pele” of Loch Kinnord was handed over at his death (1580) to his nephew, in as defensible a condition as it had been for the previous century.

The youthful Earl who now succeeded, deprived of the wise counsels of his experienced uncle, displayed at first not a little rashness, extravagance, and pride. He even negotiated with foreign Governments, as if he were

an independent sovereign, and affected to despise the Government of his own country. This bearing and action led to the battle of Glenlivet (3rd Oct., 1594), the result of which was to convince him that, though he had signally defeated a far superior force under Argyle, sent against him by the Government, he had placed himself by his victory in a position of most imminent danger—in fact an untenable position. He therefore submitted to a voluntary exile until the animosity raised against him should subside. On his return to his native land, two years thereafter (13th August, 1596), he was received by the King with great honour; and on 17th April, 1599, created by letters patent, FIRST MARQUIS OF HUNTLY. Whether this favour and these honours had slightly turned his head, or roused the jealousy of the Parliament, certain it is that he very soon after fell under the suspicion of engaging again in treasonable practices against the Government; and from this date, till 1616, he was subjected to various periods of imprisonment, and frequently to sentences of excommunication by the Church authorities.

All this persecution—if so we may call it—he bore with a spirit very unlike that which he had displayed in his early youth—a spirit which shows that he was ripening into a great and good man, however mistaken his opinions in politics or his creed in religion may

have been. He now eschewed politics and devoted himself with the utmost intelligence to the improvement of his property. He was the first man in the north of Scotland who discovered the advantage of covering its barren moors with plantations of thriving timber ; and he led the way for more peaceful times by building mansions, not so much for warlike purposes as for the comforts and conveniences of a more civilized life. In pursuance of this policy, instead of taking up his residence in the fortified "Pele" of Loch Kinnord, he built a new family residence at Kandyhyle, combining, as was still necessary, the means of defence with the conveniences of more peaceful avocations. From this time Kandyhyle (*the end of the wood*), now called Dee Castle, became the principal residence of the Marquis and his family when they visited their Deeside estates.

The chapel, as a matter of course, followed the Marquis's residence ; and while the one at Loch Kinnord gradually fell into decay, its successor continued, with occasional interruptions and varying fortunes, to hold some ground from 1616 to 1873, when a new Roman Catholic chapel was built at Aboyne, rendering a place of worship at Kandyhyle unnecessary, and it has not since been used for that purpose.

The Marquis, we have reason to believe, resided very frequently at Kandyhyle. When Spalding, the

local historian of the time, has occasion to notice a visit of his Lordship, he does so as if it were a thing of common occurrence—for example, “The 10th of July, 1633, the Marquis of Huntly, intending to keep this parliament, came to Kandyhyle, where he fell sick ; but he sent his lady and Lady Aboyne (his daughter-in-law) to complain to his majesty anent the fire of Fren draught, who took their own time as commodiously as they could, and accompanied with some ether ladies in mourning weed, pitifully told the king of the murder done by the fire at Frendraught, humbly craving justice at his hands. The king with great patience heard this complaint, whilk he bewailed, comforted the ladies the best he could, and promised justice ; they could get no more at present, but humbly took their leave of the king and returned to their lodgings.”

It would seem also, from the traditions that still circulate in the district regarding Kandyhyle, that it was used mainly, if not entirely, as a hunting-seat, and that it was seldom occupied for military purposes. “On the hill of Little Tullich,” says the writer of the New Stat. Account, “overlooking the site of the old Castle of *Cean-na-coil*, are the remains of what is called ‘My Lord’s House,’ consisting of five courses of a square stone building, the wall at the base course 12 feet thick, and diminishing about a foot each course, so that the five courses present, on the outside, the

appearance of a stair of so many steps on each side. The entry is from the west, and the apartment within is $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet each side. The use of this building is reported to have been for obtaining a view during a deer-hunt."

It may be allowable so far to digress from the direct narrative as to say that the skilled workmen employed in the building of the new castle at *Cean-na-coil* were brought by the Marquis from the town of Huntly. After the completion of the work several of these settled on the Deeside estates, and afterwards became industrious and respected tenants. The Robertsons, the Milnes, and the Calders trace their origin as tenants and followers of the Huntly family on Deeside to the above circumstance. Their "forebears" were artificers in stone, iron, and timber, and settled ultimately in Ballaterich, Glentanar, and Greystone.

It was in the family of the first named that the youthful Lord Byron resided for some time, when recovering from an attack of fever ; and the name of one member has been immortalized by obtaining a place in his poetry. Mary, the second daughter, had won the boyish affection of the young poet ; and, though he might say,

" It could not be love, for I knew not the name,"
certain it is that her image was not effaced from his memory even in the later years of his life. Mary was

not generally esteemed such a beauty as her elder sister, Jane; but the writer has it from one that knew her in her bloom, that "she was a bonnie lassie for a' that." It may interest the reader to know something of the after life of "Byron's Mary," as (after the publication of his "Hours of Idleness") she was generally called. Her parents were not wealthy, but her mother was well connected. Helen Bland Watson Macdonald, afterwards Mrs. Robertson of Ballaterich, was the lawful daughter of Captain Macdonald of Rinetan, whose descent can, it is said, be traced from a Lord of the Isles. Mr. Robertson had a large family; one of the younger sons, named Lewis, was playfully styled "Lewis XIII.," to mark his place among the other members; and hence arose a saying that one of the kings of France was born at Ballaterich. Through Captain Macdonald's influence three of the sons obtained commissions in the H.E.I.C.S., and all rose to the rank of Colonel. Other two members of the family were educated for the Roman Catholic priesthood, but, it is believed, they never entered into orders, owing, it is said, to some difficulties in regard to their taking the oath of celibacy. Mary, Lord Byron's first flame, married Kenneth Stewart, an Excise officer, then stationed in the parish of Crathie. At his death, which occurred not many years after their marriage, she removed to Aberdeen, where she died; but her remains were conveyed to the old Churchyard

of Glentanar, where there is a handsome tombstone over her grave, bearing the following inscription :—

“ Sacred to the memory of James Robertson, who departed this life on 4th day of April, 1814, aged 71 years ; and of Helen Macdonald, his spouse, who died on 11th day of August, 1813, aged 60 years : Also of MARY ROBERTSON, their daughter, widow of Kenneth Stewart, who died at Aberdeen on 2nd March, 1867, aged 85 years.”

It thus appears that Mary Robertson—“ My Sweet Mary ”—was the poet’s senior by six years.

Even at that early age (eleven) the wilful, intractable disposition, which in riper years too much distinguished the character of the noble bard, had begun to display itself. The following is the account the author has received from one who well remembers the young poet during his residence on Deeside :—“ He was a very takin’ laddie, but no easily managed. He was very fond of coming up to see my father’s shop (a carpenter’s workshop), and particularly fond o’ the turning lathe ; but he widna haud his hands frae ony o’ the tools, and he spoiled them completely before he would let them go. My father couldna lay hands on him, and he wid tak’ nae telling ; so at last he always set some o’ us to watch when we wid see him coming up the brae frae Ballaterich ; and when he got word that he was coming he would lock the door an’ gang awa’ out about. There was nae ither way o’ deein’ wi’ him.”



Chapter VIII.

CIVIL WAR,

TO 1645 A.D.

THE Aboyne Peerage, with the holders of which the Castle of Loch Kinnord and surrounding lands are henceforth mainly associated, took its rise in 1627, when King Charles I., by letters patent, created Lord John Gordon, second son of the 1st Marquis of Huntly, **VISCOUNT OF MELGUM** and **LORD ABOYNE**. But the young Lord did not long enjoy his new title, having been burnt to death in the house of Frendraught, in October, 1630; and with his death the peerage became extinct.

Two years after a new peerage was created by patent, dated at Whitehall, 20th April, 1632, reciting that "We being informed of the lamentable death of the late Viscount of Melgum, and well knowing the good service performed to us by his elder brother,

George, Lord Gordon, and being willing that the former title of Viscount should be revived in the family, &c." The patent then proceeds in due form to create George, Lord Gordon, eldest son of the (1st) Marquis of Huntly, **VISCOUNT OF ABOYNE**, during the life of his father, with a limiting clause to the effect that, should he survive his father, and succeed to the Marquisate, the title of Viscount of Aboyne should then descend to his *second* son, James, and his heirs male bearing the name of Gordon. On the decease of his father, the 1st Marquis of Huntly, in 1636, he did succeed to the estates and honours, and the Aboyne Peerage descended in terms of the patent to his second son, James, who now became **SECOND VISCOUNT OF ABOYNE**. He may be said to have been a man of war from his youth, for scarcely had he succeeded to the peerage when he had to draw the sword, as leader of the clan in defence of the King against the Parliament. His father and elder brother being then prisoners in Edinburgh, he mustered their vassals for the purpose of repelling an invasion of their lands by the Earl of Montrose. A battle took place at Bridge of Dee near Aberdeen, 19th June, 1639, in which Aboyne was defeated, and whence he soon afterwards escaped by sea into England ; "And to the king goes he."

A lull now occurred in the military operations of both parties, during which the Marquis and Lord

Gordon were liberated from their imprisonment in Edinburgh Castle ; but it was only the calm before the storm. The House of Huntly was at this time unusually strong in military talent ; but it had also unusual difficulties to contend with. The clan was by far the most powerful in the north, but then the whole military strength of the south and west was arrayed against it ; and though the chief and his four eldest sons were able commanders, they were seldom all agreed in counsel, and often acted in opposition to each other. With such sources of internal weakness in the presence of watchful and powerful enemies, the house of Gordon could not stand ; and so it proved.

Hostilities were renewed in the north by the Marquis of Argyle, who, under pretence of putting down some Highland marauders, invaded the lands of Lochaber and Badenoch. "This done, he disbands his army and comes down Deeside, about twelve hundred men, but what order he took of the broken men, oppressors of the country, was not mickle heard of ; so forward was he for the Covenant." This was the first visit Deeside had the honour of receiving from the Argyleshire men during these troubles, and it occurred in the month of June or July, 1640. There was little damage done to the Gordon lands by this invasion. The two great lords, Huntly and Argyle, were as yet on good terms, and brothers-in-law, Huntly having

married Argyle's eldest sister, so there was no "spuilzie" committed this time.

Next year, 1641, a great calamity befell the Huntly property on Deeside. The fine mansion which the late Marquis had built at Kandyhyle (Dee Castle) for his summer residence in these parts had been let to a military officer of the name of Garden, who had been stationed here with some soldiers to take order with the broken men. Whether it was through the negligence of Garden, or as some with better reason suppose, by the hands of these broken men, who naturally desired to be quit of his presence, certain it is that "upon the night of the 23rd of March, the place of Kandyhyle, by a sudden fire was recklessly burnt and destroyed, and the haill plenishing consumed to the Marquis's great skaith." Huntly was not disposed quietly to submit to this great loss in whatever way the fire might have originated ; and "Crown'r (Major) Garden was compelled to agree and pay the Marquis" for the damage his mansion had sustained. Kandyhyle was not again rebuilt till after the troublous times of the Civil War were ended, soon after which it again appears, though only as a shooting box, the old Castle having become a ruin.

Three years later, namely in 1644, the two great parties, Covenanters and anti-Covenanters, having become irreconcilable enemies to each other, both prepared

to draw the sword in terrible earnest. Huntly, holding the Royal Commission of Lieutenancy of the north, assumed the command of the latter, and set vigorously about marshalling his vassals and clan for the coming struggle. For this purpose he came to Deeside, and fixed his headquarters at Aboyne. We may form some idea of the power of the Gordons at this time, when we learn that their chief, at the great gathering of the clan on this occasion, "came from Aboyne, where he had many Highlandmen and footmen there, and in the country about, attending his service. He came to Aberdeen with about two hundred horse and eight hundred foot, which were reckoned in the Links when they were drilled." Spalding, the contemporary historian, adds that "he had few commanders besides himself, Crowner King, and Major Nathaniel Gordon." If the reader should ask where were his brave sons, we have to answer that his eldest son and heir, the Lord Gordon, was with the Covenanters; the second son, James, Viscount Aboyne, was with the king in England; the third son, Lewis, had terribly offended his father, who refused to repose any trust in him; and the fourth, Charles, who many years after became 1st Earl of Aboyne, was a young lad at school in Aberdeen.

On the approach of an army 6,000 strong, led by the Marquis of Argyle, the Earl Marischal, and the Lord Gordon, Huntly disbanded his followers, and re-

tired, first to Strathbogie, and afterwards to a lonely isle in Strathnaver, in the extreme north-west of Sutherlandshire, where he lay concealed for a long time. “Meanwhile there came to Cromar-Braes, Aboyne, Strachan, and the countries about, eight hundred Highlandmen of Argyleshire, where they had an allowance ilk day, to be taken off the country, of twenty-four bolls meal, an hundred and twenty wedders, and (many) marts, with sixty dollars of money. They took up the rents and monies, and lived upon the Marquis of Huntly’s lands in Cromar, Glenmuick, and Glentanar, frae their incoming, whilk was upon the — day of May to the 3rd day of June.” They did not, however, leave on the 3rd of June, as had at first been intended, but continued to infest the country for a month longer. Spalding’s account of their conduct, though a little prolix, is graphic:—“Argyle’s Highlandmen, called the *Cleansers*, lay in Birse, Cromar, Glentanar, Glenmuck, Abergeldie, Aboyn, and other places about, where indeed they cleansed all frae their coming there, which was upon the — day of May till the 1st of July, then they departed, leaving only behind them a captain with eighty soldiers. This regiment of Argyle’s men was counted eight hundred footmen, with their commanders; they neither spared Covenanter nor anti-Covenanter, minister nor laick. The haill country people fled that could flee, and left their houses desolate. They plun-

dered and spoilzied the house of Aboyne and the house of Abergeldie, with their ground ; they spoilzied and plundered the haill Birse, Cromar, Glentanar, Glenmuick, and left neither horse, sheep, nolt, ky, nor four-footed beast in all these brave countries ; nor victuals, corn, goods, or gear that they might lay their hands upon ; and seeing they could not live longer in these harried bounds, they got orders and moved home upon the foresaid 1st of July (1644)."

During the next month a split took place among the Covenanters. They had already been diverging into two parties, whom we may call the Moderates and the Radicals. At the head of the former was Montrose, and at the head of the latter, which was the stronger party, was Argyle. The Lord Gordon strongly sympathised with the opinions of Montrose, but he was for some time restrained from taking part with him by the influence which his uncle, Argyle, possessed over him. When the rupture could no longer be avoided, Montrose hastily broke with the party and went over to the king, by whom he was graciously received and appointed his lieutenant in Scotland. Viscount Aboyne, as already stated, was also at Court ; and it is likely that he and Montrose concerted the plan of a rising in the Highlands. The Gordons were now without a head, but their fiery spirits could not brook the daily insults and spoilzies to which they were subjected, and no sooner

did Montrose set up the Royal Standard than they hastened, though in detached and independent parties, to join him. In consequence of this the Lords of the Covenant issued an order for the demolition of the castles and houses belonging to such of the clan as were suspected or known to be anti-Covenanters. Among these are mentioned Abergeldie, Aboyne, Whitehouse in Cromar, and Auchterfoul (now Wester Coull), "which by the Parliament were ordained to be casten down to the ground ;" "yet it pleased God that the houses were not casten down but yet stand still."

Montrose being now at the head of a considerable body of troops marched northward, while the covenanting, or parliamentary army, lying at Aberdeen, under command of Argyle, Marischal, and the Lord Gordon, prepared to dispute the passage of the Dee. The wary Montrose, however, gave them the slip, crossed the Dee at Crathes, and marched boldly into the heart of the Gordon lands, taking care that his soldiers should commit no act of spoliation or oppression. Argyle and his company followed at the head of a superior force, but always at a safe distance from the enemy ; and in this way the two armies passed through the Garioch, Strathbogie, and Speyside. Here Argyle lost sight of his foe, who next appeared in the Carse of Gowrie, marching to the seige of Dundee.

Meanwhile Argyle's foot army scattered themselves

over the land of the anti-covenanting Gordons and others, "cutting down the pleasant garden plantings to the huts, destroying the corns, and left not a four-footed beast in the lands of Drum, Cromar, Auchterfoul, Aboyn, Abergeldie, and the country about." This was a much heavier loss and oppression to the poor people than the visitation of the *Cleansers* in the months of May and June; for as it was now the month of October, and the ingathering of the harvest nearly completed, such a spoilzie and destruction placed them face to face with famine and starvation during the winter.

Before the winter came on, however, Montrose wheeling about from Angus, in a few days swooped down upon these marauders, who fled in all haste, some to Aberdeen, some home to Argyleshire. It was a case of "Chevy Chase." Again the two armies followed each other very nearly as before; and neither appeared again on Deeside till the spring of the following year; before which time Lord Gordon and his third brother, Lord Ludovic or Lewis, had separated themselves from the Covenanters, and were serving the king under Montrose, who then lay encamped at Kirriemuir.

"Understanding some enemies were risen and growing to an head (*i.e.*, collecting their forces) sic as Fren draught, the Frasers, Forbeses, and their kin and friends, and chiefly against the house of Huntly and their friends and followers, Montrose most wisely directs from Kirrie-

muir the Lord Gordon's brother, Lewis, or Lord Lewis, with about a hundred and sixty horsemen, to go home and defend his country and friends." By this time, however, the Covenanters in these parts had gathered to a great head, and were holding their committees in Aberdeen for uptaking of the excise and laying additional burdens upon the king's subjects. The Lord Gordon himself was therefore despatched with orders to dissolve the committee. Passing the Mounth, still white with snow, he crossed the Dee at Mill of Dinnet upon the 8th day of April, 1645, and directing his course down Deeside, the committee suddenly dispersed like pigeons at the approach of a hawk. Lord Gordon then passed through the country taking order with his enemies; and strengthening his castles, fixed the head quarters of his army in Morayshire, whither the parliament sent Major Hurry in pursuit of him, while General Baillie was directed to keep his eye upon Montrose, who still kept moving about in Angus and Perthshire, with the view of effecting a junction with the Viscount Aboyne, who with other gentlemen were, he had been informed, on their way from the king to join him if possible. As soon as Aboyne and his company arrived, Montrose gave Baillie the slip, passed the mountains, and crossing the Dee with his whole force at Mill of Crathie, sent Aboyne with a detachment to Aberdeen to procure ammunition, moving himself by way of

Skene to effect a junction with the Lord Gordon, now threatened by Major Hurry. All these movements having been successfully executed, Baillie, thus outgeneraled, hastened to the succour of Hurry, who by this time was as far north as Morayshire, on rather a wild goose chase, as the Lord Gordon had doubled round and was now united with Montrose. On the 10th of May, 1645, Baillie's army, about 2000 foot and 120 troopers, passed the Cairn o' Mounth, and encamped in Birse. Next day, which was Sunday, they marched into Cromar, and encamped on the flat ground betwixt the kirks of Tarland and Coull. Here he resolved to await reinforcements, and sent directions to Hurry so to move his forces as that the two parliamentary armies should approach each other; but in the position of the armies no messenger could reach Hurry, as he would have to pass through the enemy's lines; and Montrose was too wise a general to let his enemies communicate with each other, if he could prevent it. Montrose had thus the fullest information regarding their purposes, while Baillie at least was even ignorant where his colleague lay. He therefore kept his camp in Cromar, "plundering, and eating the green corn scarce yet come to the blade," while Montrose dealt with his colleague, Hurry, at Auldearn, where he utterly defeated him, in a "bloody battle in which the Lord Gordon and the Viscount of Aboyne, and their name and

followers, fought so valiantly that they deserved eternal praise."

As soon as Baillie heard of this defeat "he lifts frae Cromar with all speed, and hastens to Strathbogie," with the view of affording protection to the scattered remnants of Hurry's forces. This was a judicious movement, and gave Montrose no little trouble ; because for some weeks after the battle of Auldearn he was almost as weak as the general he had vanquished ; "for his Highlanders must needs have time to rin hame wi' the spoilzie."

A series of manœuvres now took place between the two armies, Montrose evading battle till his Highlanders should return, and Baillie wishing to draw him into action. In the course of these movements Montrose lay for a time encamped in Cromar, in the vicinity of Loch Kinnord, while Baillie approached him from the direction of Aberdeen. Montrose then moved his forces to the old Castle of Corgarff, where he awaited the incoming of his Highlanders. When these had assembled in sufficient numbers he resolved to give his adversary battle, and drawing him into a favourable position for himself near the village of Alford, he attacked and signally defeated him ; the Gordons on this occasion, as at Auldearn, bearing the brunt of the battle and achieving the victory.

The victory, however, brilliant as it was, was dearly

bought by the death of the young chief of the Gordons. As I consider the character of the Lord Gordon, who fell in the battle of Alford, in the flower of his age, inferior in bravery, generosity, and magnanimity to that of very few of his noble ancestors, I shall not scruple even in this brief historical sketch, to give at some length the opinion formed of him by competent contemporary writers :—“Lord Gordon was a very hopeful young gentleman, able of mind and body, about the age of 28 years.” “There was,” says Wishart, “a general lamentation for the loss of the Lord Gordon, whose death seemed to eclipse all the glory of the victory. As the report spread among the soldiers, every one appeared to be struck dumb with the melancholy news, and a universal silence prevailed for some time through the army. However, their grief burst through all restraints, venting itself in the voice of lamentation and sorrow. When the first transports were over, the soldiers exclaimed against heaven and earth for bereaving the king, the kingdom, and themselves of such an excellent young nobleman; and unmindful of the victory or the plunder, they thronged about the body of their dead captain, some weeping over the wounds and kissing his lifeless limbs, while others praised his comely appearance even in death, and extolled his noble mind, which was enriched with every valuable qualification that could adorn his high birth or ample

fortune ; they even cursed the victory bought at so dear a rate. Nothing could have supported the army under this immense sorrow but the presence of Montrose, whose safety gave them joy, and not a little revived their drooping spirits. In the meantime he could not command his grief, but mourned bitterly over the melancholy fate of his only and dearest friend, grievously complaining that one who was the honour of his nation, the ornament of the Scots nobility, and the boldest assertor of the Royal authority in the north, had fallen in the flower of his youth."





Chapter IX.

CIVIL WAR,

TO 1647 A.D.

MONTROSE was doomed very soon to feel the loss he had sustained in the death of Lord Gordon; for the Marquis of Huntly, now living in concealment in Strathnaver, hearing of the death of his eldest son, and of the brilliant career of Montrose, of whose fame he was always jealous, returned to his own country, and the Gordons were never undividedly true to Montrose afterwards. His defeat at Philiphaugh gave Huntly a pretext for acting an independent part, of which he was not slow to take advantage, but though he had the ambition he had not the talent to take the place of Montrose; and his jealousy and family pride ruined both, and ultimately brought both to the scaffold in the same cause.

Trusting to be supported by the Gordons, Montrose

proceeded to the north, and, for appearance sake, was joined by some of the clan headed by the Viscount Aboyne, now the eldest surviving son, and Lord Lewis Gordon, his next brother; but the influence of their father, who never ceased to upbraid them with overlooking the importance of their family, and lending their assistance to his rival, in a short time weakened the attachment of the young men to Montrose, whom they soon afterwards deserted with the whole of their followers.

The noble minded Montrose, however, did not retaliate, but marching from Alford, through Cromar, passed Loch Kinnord, pursued his course up Deeside, and crossing the Cairnwell, pitched his camp in Strathardle, and there waited for the reinforcements which had been promised him both by Viscount Aboyne, when he took his leave, and by other Highland chieftains. These failing to arrive at the appointed time, and his own army being too weak to carry out any successful invasion of the south, he again directed his course northward, in the hope that if he could obtain a personal interview with Huntly, he might be able to induce him to co-operate with him in bringing the country over to the interest of the king. Huntly greatly dreaded a personal interview with Montrose, and had taken steps to evade it; but they were rendered ineffectual by the skill and activity of his more experienced fellow-

general. Leaving his little army near Kinnord, and selecting a small body guard of light cavalry, he struck across the country ; and one morning while Huntly, believing that the royal army were lying with their general somewhere in Athole or Braemar, was, in fancied security, sitting down to breakfast, who should ride up to the door of the Bog of Gight, but Montrose with fifty or sixty horsemen ? There was no avoiding the interview ; and he made the best of the untoward meeting, promising, though in a half-hearted way, co-operation. A plan was arranged between the two for the reduction of the Castle of Inverness. They were to approach it from different points, Montrose from the Highlands, Huntly from the Lowlands of Morayshire. The former directing his army from Cromar, through Strathspey, was soon at his post ; but the latter, leaving to his rival the task—hopeless in the circumstances—of reducing the Castle of Inverness, wheeled round and marched towards Aberdeen, which he intended to surprise and capture, and thus emulate his military glory.

When he had proceeded as far as Kintore, he was joined by the Earl of Crawford with Montrose's horse ; but hearing that General Middleton was approaching to the relief of Aberdeen, with a parliamentary army, he suddenly changed his plan, and broke up his forces into two divisions, with the one of which

he and Crawford retired to Banff, while the other, under Viscount Aboyne, marched up Deeside, and fixed their head-quarters near Loch Kinnord, the castle and fortifications of which they were employed for the next three months in repairing and strengthening. This work was set about in the end of February, or early in March 1646 ; and the force employed on it is estimated at not less than a thousand men ; but as many of them were Highlanders, who considered manual labour an indignity, the work performed, it may well be supposed, was not commensurate with the hands employed. However that may have been, there is reason to believe that the place was rendered one of considerable strength.

Ever since the removal of the family residence to Kandychyle, the fort of Loch Kinnord had been allowed to fall into decay. This would appear from the fact that, although both royalist and parliamentary generals had, during the wars of the Covenant, several times passed and repassed the lake, and encamped in its vicinity, it is only but once mentioned by any of the writers who record these events. During that period it would seem therefore to have been of small importance in a military point of view. The Marquis of Huntly now (spring of 1646) restored it, and garrisoned it with a body of soldiers in name of the king.

When the Marquis found himself relieved of the presence of General Middleton, who, about the end of

May, set out from Aberdeen in pursuit of Montrose, he resolved to carry out his plan of capturing that city, which was now defended only by a small cavalry force, under Colonel Montgomery. "Accordingly, he ordered his men to march from Deeside to Inverurie, where he appointed a general rendezvous to be held." He succeeded in capturing the town, with a loss on his side of only about twenty men in all. He has been severely blamed for allowing it to be plundered by his soldiery ; but there is at least this excuse to offer for him, that although the "brave town" did not deserve it at his hands, it was probably not in his power to restrain the marauding disposition of his wild Highlanders, whose sole motive for being under arms was spoil, and who looked upon the spoil as their rightful reward. Laden with plunder, these Highlanders escaped to their homes to deposit the spoilzie, and Huntly suddenly found himself, with greatly reduced numbers, liable to be cut off by General Middleton, who might very soon be expected from the north. Leaving Aberdeen, therefore, he moved back to his old quarters at Loch Kin-nord, whither he was very soon followed by Middleton, and, after some skirmishing at the Pass of Ballater, compelled to retire to Braemar ; and Middleton, not caring to follow him thither, returned to Aberdeen. This occurred about the middle of June, 1646, and before the month had closed the King, who had sur-

rendered to the Scottish army, ordered both Montrose and Huntly to disband their forces. The war for the moment was therefore at an end.

Had the war finally ended here, the lives of both these noblemen might have been saved, and their estates in great part secured to them and their descendants; while the Fort of Loch Kinnord, crumbling slowly under the weight of years, would still have presented a magnificent ruin, with a drawbridge which might even yet have afforded sure footing to the astonished visitor. A very different fate awaited it.

Before six months had passed, the King, who was then under a sort of honourable confinement with the Scottish army near Newcastle, perceiving that he would be surrendered to the English Parliament, and in that case dreading the worst, sent a secret message to Huntly to raise his forces, and he would attempt to escape and join him in the north. The Marquis did so, but the plot was discovered and frustrated. This placed him in an exceedingly difficult and dangerous position. He was now a rebel in the eyes of the law, for the King had surrendered his authority to the Scottish Estates, against whom he had again drawn the sword after having come to terms with them. In these straits he continued to keep his forces together, and was even successful in defeating Major Bickerton, who had been sent to capture him.

At the approach, however, of General David Leslie, he disbanded his little army, and with a few staunch followers fled to the mountains of Lochaber for shelter. "Leslie thereupon reduced the castles belonging to the Marquis." He first took that of Strathbogie, in which house was Lord Charles Gordon (afterwards Earl of Aboyne), who, with the Governor, Newton, were made prisoners; then the neighbouring Castle of Lesmore; then, marching northward, he took Gordon Castle, or Bog of Gight, as it was then called. Marching southward, he "next took the isle of LOCH-TANNAR, in Aboyne, which had been strongly fortified by Huntly."*

Thereafter General Leslie marched into Badenoch in quest of the Marquis, but not finding him there, he captured the Castle of Ruthven, another strong fortress of the Gordons, and proceeded into Lochaber, where he took in their remaining Highland stronghold, the Castle of Inverlochy; and thence advanced to the subjugation of the Western Isles, leaving the pursuit of his lordship to General Middleton. Huntly succeeded for several months in eluding the hot pursuit of his enemies, living in dens, caves, and the recesses of deep

* The accounts which we have of the taking of these strengths in "Gordon's Continuation" are provokingly meagre. Enough is said to show that some of them at least were bravely defended, while not a single detail of interest is given.

forests in the most inaccessible parts of the Highlands. A reward of £1000 sterling was now offered by the Committee of Estates to any person who should apprehend him—an exploit which was accomplished by Colonel Menzies in the following manner:—Middleton was lying with his army in Strathbogie, while his officers with their dragoons were scouring the country far and wide in quest of the fugitive, who but a few years before was almost absolute lord of all that region. In one of these excursions, “Menzies, having received intelligence of the place of the Marquis’s retreat, got the command of a select body of horse, consisting of three troops, with which he proposed to surprise and capture his lordship. Huntly’s place of concealment was well chosen. It was the farmhouse of Dalnabo, at the junction of the rivers Allanach and Avon, three miles below Inchrory. Close by the house was a deep narrow defile, cut out of the old sandstone rock by the impetuous torrent of the Allanach. In case of danger he might retreat thither, where he would be safe from the pursuit of any species of cavalry, and where a few resolute followers might defend him against almost any number of assailants. Menzies was probably aware of this, and made his arrangements accordingly. It was in the dead of winter, towards the end of December, 1647, when the season of the year, and the inaccessible nature of the hiding place produced a feeling of security,

and a remissness in the watch. About midnight, just as the Marquis was going to bed, the tramp of horsemen was heard at the door." Huntly was attended by only ten gentlemen and servants as a body-guard, who, notwithstanding the great disparity of numbers, made a brave attempt to protect their master, in which six of them were killed and the rest mortally wounded, among whom was John Grant, the landlord. On hearing that the Marquis had been taken prisoner, the whole of his vassals in the neighbourhood, to the number of 400 or 500, with Grant of Carron* at their head, flew to arms to rescue him. Menzies, dreading a rescue would be attempted, carried the Marquis in all haste to Blairfindie, in Glenlivet, where his lordship received secret intimation that his followers had solemnly sworn that they would either rescue him or die to a man. However, he dissuaded them from the intended attempt, and sent them word "that, now almost worn out with grief and fatigue, he could no longer live in hills and dens; and hoped that his enemies would not drive things to the worst; and, if such was the will of Heaven, he could not outlive the sad fate he foresaw his royal master was likely to undergo; and, be the event as it would, he doubted

* This was the notorious "Hamish na' tuim," one of the most daring of outlaws, who had long held the post of Captain of broken, or hill men, in these parts.

not but the just providence of God would restore the royal family, and his along with it."

From Strathbogie, the Marquis was carried under a strong guard of horse to Leith, where he was delivered to the magistrates and thrown into jail. The committee pressed for an immediate execution, and his life was spared till the meeting of Parliament, by a majority of only one vote.

The Marquis languished in prison from December, 1647, till March, 1649 ; for during the lifetime of the king, the Parliament had not ventured to bring him to the block ; but the king himself had during the interval been put to death ; and the Parliament, no longer under restraint, on 16th March ordered the Marquis of Huntly to be beheaded on the 22nd of the same month, at the Market Cross of Edinburgh. When the fatal day came he ascended the scaffold with a firm step, and turning "to the people, he told them that he was going to die for having employed some years of his life in the service of the king, his master ; that he was sorry he was not the first of his Majesty's subjects who had suffered for his cause, so glorious in itself that it sweetened to him all the bitterness of death." He then declared that he had charity to forgive those who had voted for his death, although he could not admit that he had done anything contrary to the laws. He then offered up a prayer, and embracing some friends around him, submitted his

neck without any symptom of emotion to the fatal instrument.*

During the time Huntly lay in prison, Argyle bought up all the "comprisings" on his estates, "and caused summon at the Market Cross of Aberdeen, by sound of trumpet, all his wadsetters and creditors to appear at Edinburgh in the month of March following the Marquis's imprisonment, calling on them to produce their securities before the Lords of Session, with certification that if they did not appear their securities were to be declared null and void." Some of these creditors sold their claims to Argyle, and having thus bought up all the rights he could obtain upon Huntly's estate at a small or nominal value, under pretence that he was acting for the benefit of his nephew, the Viscount Aboyne, he granted bonds for the amount, which Spalding says he never paid. In this way did Argyle possess himself of the Marquis's estates, which he continued to enjoy for upwards of twelve years, viz., from 1648 to 1660.

And where was this nephew of whose interests he took such tender care? Although the father was hunted down at Dalnabo, his four surviving sons

* A fine portrait of his Lordship, styled "Marquis of Gordon," is in Pinkerton's Scottish Gallery: another, perhaps a copy from this, is in Fessandarroch Lodge, belonging to William Cunliffe Brooks, Esq., M.P.

managed to escape from their pursuers, and fled the country. The two eldest, James, Viscount Aboyne, and Lord Lewis, went to Paris ; Charles, afterwards created Earl of Aboyne, had as already noticed, been taken prisoner, and narrowly escaped the fate of his father, and his youngest brother, Henry, went abroad, and ultimately took service under the King of Poland. When James heard of the execution of Charles I. he sunk into a melancholy, and in a few days after died of the grief it gave him ; and with him, who died without issue, the Viscounty of Aboyne became extinct.

Argyle's management of the property of his brother-in-law, the Marquis of Huntly, was of a piece with his tender regard for the life of him and his family. Probably still apprehensive that a counter-revolution might arise, which might restore their fortunes, his first object was to see that the fortresses in which their strength had lain should be destroyed. General Leslie, who had captured these in 1647, had no instruction to dismantle them, and he probably did them little injury. In the month of June, 1648, just fourteen months after the capture by Leslie, and six months after the apprehension of the Marquis at Dalnabo, Argyle procured an Act of Parliament to effect his object, in which “the fortifications of Loch Kender are ordered to be slighted.” The *slighting* ordered by the parlia-

ment meant their utter demolition, which was soon after very effectually executed. Time and the utilitarian hands of engineers and others have done the rest, and left this once and long celebrated lake and fortress as it is this day.

HERE ENDS THE ANCIENT HISTORY OF
LOCH KINNORD.







Chapter X.

RECENT HISTORY.

LOCH Kinnord having been so long the property of the eldest branch of the Gordon family, it may not be inappropriate to trace briefly the history of the branch of that house into whose possession it now came, and to notice some of the incidents that have in recent times tended to leave the ancient ruins so bare.

At the death of the Marquis of Huntly, who, as already stated, was executed at Edinburgh, there remained alive, of his large family of five sons and five daughters, only three sons and four daughters; and before the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, all the daughters had died with the exception of the youngest, who was the wife of Count Morstain, High Treasurer of Poland, with whom Henry, the youngest son, found refuge during the twelve years of the Commonwealth. Lord

Lewis, who, as the eldest surviving son, would have succeeded to the family estates and honours, to which he was titularly restored by Charles II. in 1651, though of course he never received possession, had also died in 1653, leaving a son, George, a boy two years of age, to succeed him when fortune should turn in his favour. When that turn of fortune did come it was thought expedient to issue new letters patent, restoring the estates and honours to this boy, now nine years old.

Charles, now the eldest surviving brother of Lewis, who had been taken prisoner when the Castle of Strathbogie surrendered to General Leslie in 1647, was, after some years of confinement, restored to liberty on parole. In consideration of his great and faithful services during the civil war, the king was pleased to raise him to the dignity of the peerage by the titles of Earl of Aboyne and Lord Gordon of Strathavon and Glenlivet, by patent to him and the heirs male of his body, dated 10th September, 1660,* and in order to support this dignity, a portion of the family property, consisting of all and whole the lands and lordship of Aboyne, was also con-

* This is the account according to Douglas's Peerage; but according to Debrett, the latest authority, the patent creating the Earldom of Aboyne was issued in 1660, and another creating the other title in the following year, when the charter conferring the land was granted.

veyed to him by charter under the great seal in the following year.

His lordship, who was thus 1st Earl of Aboyne (the previous title connected with the estate was that of Viscount), soon after the acquisition of the property married Margaret Irvine, sister of his brother-in-law, Alexander Irvine, laird of Drum. She was a lady of great beauty and accomplishments, affectionately and poetically remembered as "Bonny Peggy Irvine." It is uncertain whether this lady really fell a victim to grief of heart, consequent upon some misunderstanding with her lord, as represented in the old ballad of "The Earl of Aboyne," or whether, as is more likely, the ballad is to be viewed as merely a fond poetical tribute to her memory by her sorrowing husband, in the style of the elegaic poetry of the time. From whatever cause, "Bonny Peggy Irvine"—a beautiful portrait of whom still adorns the walls of Aboyne Castle—died in or about the year 1664, leaving an only daughter, the Lady Anne Gordon, who was—17th June, 1665—served heir of Lady Margaret Irvine, her mother, late wife of Charles, Earl of Aboyne.

Some years after, he married Elizabeth Lyon, only daughter of the Earl of Strathmore, by whom he left four children—Charles, George, John, and Elizabeth.

At the date of the restoration his lordship had the entire charge of the Huntly estates, his nephew, the

Marquis, being then only nine years of age ; and from his skilful management of them he may properly be styled the restorer of the fortunes of the family. In 1671 he rebuilt the Castle of Aboyne, and otherwise beautified the grounds. He would now have resigned to the Marquis the charge of his estates, but with much good sense that young nobleman prevailed upon him to continue his trust, which he did till his death in 1681.

His character is thus drawn by one who had known him in his age :—“ Vigorous and sprightly, he had a naturall and high vein of poesy, was civil to such as lived at a distance, but difficult to his neighbours.” That he was difficult to his neighbours—even to those of his own clan—is manifest from the complaints contained in the MSS. of the laird of Tillfoudie and others ; but it must be borne in mind that he occupied a peculiarly difficult position. His great influence at Court raised the expectation among his friends that he could procure for them any favour or redress of any grievance they might desire ; if their petitions were refused, the blame was laid on the Earl. And not only were claims innumerable made on the Government, but also on the estates of the Marquis for advances made to, or services rendered, his grandfather in the time of his need. These the Earl seldom entertained, and when he did not, the claimant upbraided him for his ingratitude or some other shortcoming of character.

As to his “naturall and high vein of poesy,” he had a little of that by inheritance, for his father, George, second Marquis of Huntly, was, we are told, “a great patron of learning and learned men. He was the author of that so pretty an energick distich to be seen to this day on the royal palace of the Louvre at Paris—

Non orbis gentem, non urbem gens habet ulla,
Urbsve domum, dominum, nec domus ulla parem,”

which may be thus translated—

The world hath not such a nation,
Nor nation a city like this ;
Nor city a mansion can boast,
Nor mansion a lord like this.

It is not often that a couplet immortalises a man ; but it must be allowed that for the French capital, king, and people, Lord Huntly’s couplet was happy and highly complimentary, and we do not wonder that it became for generations, perhaps is still, the motto for the royal palace of the Louvre. He transmitted the gift in double portion to at least two of his sons, for we are told in the “Lives of Scottish Poets” (London, 1822), that “the heroic and chivalrous Lord George Gordon, who fell at Alford in 1645, numbered among his many accomplishments that of writing verses ;” and Lord Charles Gordon, first Earl of Aboyne, a noble author unknown to Walpole, seems also to have escaped the more searching notice of the historians of Scottish poetry. His verses, which occur in several manuscript

collections of the period, are not without merit, although too often polluted by the licentious spirit of the loose age in which he lived. A few stanzas may be selected from what seems to have been one of the most popular of his pieces :—

“EARLE OF ABOYN’S LYNES.”

I.

“ It’s not thy beauty nor thy wit
 That did my heart obtain,
 For none of these could conquer yet
 Either my breast or brain.
 And if you’ll not prove kind to me,
 Yet true as heretofore,
 Your slave henceforth I’ll scorn to be,
 Nor dote upon you more.

IV.

“ Think not my fancy to o’ercome
 By proving thus unkind ;
 No soothing smile nor seeming frown
 Can satisfy my mind.

VI.

“ I mean to love and not to dote,
 I’ll love for love again ;
 And if ye say ye love me not,
 I’ll laugh at your disdain !
 If ye ’ll be loving, I ’ll be kind,
 And still I ’ll constant be,
 And if the time do change your mind,
 I ’ll change as soon as ye ! ”

These lines are printed from “a Collection of several Satyrs, Lampoons, Songs, and other poems”—a manuscript of the early years of the last century in the library at Skene House, a seat of the Earl of Fife. The same volume contains a “Satyre on the Duke of Lawderdale, by the Earle of Aboyne.”

His lordship was succeeded by his eldest son, Charles, of whom there is not much to record beyond the facts, that he was of a delicate constitution, abjured the Roman Catholic religion, married his cousin, Elizabeth Lyon, second daughter of the Earl of Strathmore, and left by her one son, John, and three daughters. He died in 1702, and was succeeded by his son,

JOHN, as third Earl of Aboyne. This Earl married Grace, daughter of George Lockhart of Carnwath, who bore him two sons, Charles, who succeeded him, and John, whose son succeeded to the Carnwath property. Earl John took a leading part in Mar’s insurrection, in consequence of which he left the estates in considerable embarrassment at his death, in 1732.

CHARLES, born 1726, succeeded to the titles and estates on the death of his father in 1732. He was another man of mark in the family lineage. When a boy he acquired strong Jacobitical propensities, and would probably have come out in the celebrated rising in 1745, had not the wiser heads among his friends

managed to get him conveyed to Paris under pretence of completing his education. After he came of age, finding the property so heavily burdened, he made an effort to clear it of debt by selling the Glenmuick portion (1749) to John Farquharson of Invercauld, a cautious and shrewd old Highland chief, who, tradition says, rather took advantage of the inexperience of the youthful Earl, who "now becoming apprehensive that, from the smallness of his estate, he could not live in Scotland," sent his baggage to Paris, intending soon to follow and live abroad. Unwilling, however, to abandon his native country he ordered it to be brought back ; and he carefully attended to the improvement of his landed property, forming plantations, building, it is said, forty miles of stone fences above five feet high, extremely well executed, to enclose and subdivide his estate, and introducing improved means of agriculture among his tenants, who were then enabled easily to pay an advanced rent. His lordship soon cleared the estate of debt, enjoyed the respect and esteem of his neighbours ; and after a life remarkable for activity, intelligence and steadiness, died in St. Andrew's Square, Edinburgh, 28th December, 1794, in the 68th year of his age.

" His Lordship married first, at Edinburgh, 22nd April, 1759, Lady Margaret Stewart, third daughter of Alexander, Earl of Galloway, and by her, who died at

Aboyne Castle, 12th August, 1762, had a son, George, and two daughters.

"He married secondly, 23rd April, 1774, Lady Mary Douglas, only surviving daughter of James, ninth Earl of Morton, and had by her a son, THE HON. DOUGLAS GORDON, born 10th October, 1777, who, on the much lamented death of his cousin, the Hon. Hamilton Douglas Hallyburton of Pitcur, in 1784, succeeded to his extensive property in the county of Forfar, and in consequence assumed the name and arms of Hallyburton of Pitcur."

Charles, 4th Earl of Aboyne, was succeeded in 1794 by his eldest son,

GEORGE, as 5th Earl of Aboyne, who was born in Edinburgh, 28th June, 1761, and also became a distinguished member of his house. "His Lordship married, 4th April, 1791, Catherine, second daughter of Sir Charles Cope of Brewern in Oxfordshire, and Orton in Huntingdonshire. By this lady, with whom he got the estate of Orton, which he very considerably enlarged by purchasing, in 1803, the two adjoining parishes of Chesterton and Haddon, he had issue six sons and three daughters."

In 1815 his lordship was created a British peer by the title of Baron Meldrum of Morven, and henceforth sat in the House of Lords in right of that peerage.

In 1805, the oak piles of the ancient drawbridge of Loch Kinnord were carried off in great numbers, to lay the foundation of the stone bridge then being erected over the Dee at Ballater.

The great drought of the summer of 1826 caused such a scarcity of water, that to supply the mill of Dinnet with moving power, Loch Kinnord was utilized as a reservoir, and its surface lowered by about $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet. This draining of the water brought to light many relics of the ancient buildings that had hitherto lain concealed in the lake, owing to the depth of water over them ; and many finds were then made. The Castle Island, which had been improved for arable purposes, as early at least as 1781, was this year (1826) under a crop of bere ; but such multitudes of sea fowls and other birds frequented the lake that summer, that before harvest came, the whole produce was eaten up or destroyed by them ; and no attempt has since been made to lay down another crop of grain. The same year his lordship's eldest son, Charles Lord Gordon of Strathavon, was married to the Lady Elizabeth-Henrietta, daughter of the first Marquis Conyngham, and great rejoicings were in consequence held over the estates.

On the death of George, fifth Duke of Gordon, and eight Marquis of Huntly (28th May, 1836), the Earl of Aboyne succeeded to the title of Marquis of Huntly, and became chief of the Gordons, as the representative

of the eldest male line of that ancient house ; and his title to these honours was proved before the House of Lords on that occasion.

In 1839, the Lady Elizabeth-Henrietta, wife of his eldest son the Earl of Aboyne, died without issue ; and in 1844 his lordship married Mary-Antoinette, daughter, of the Rev. P. W. Pegus, by whom he had issue, seven sons and seven daughters ; the eldest son, the present Marquis, was born 5th March, 1847.

George, 9th Marquis of Huntly, having died 17th June, 1853, was succeeded by his eldest son,

CHARLES GORDON, as 10th Marquis of Huntly. Of his numerous family there are now alive, the present Marquis, Lord Douglas, Lord Esme, Lord Granville, and Lady Mary-Catherine Turnor, Lady Aveland, and Lady Grace-Cicelie, Lady Margaret-Ethel, Lady Elena-Mary, and Lady Ethelreda-Caroline Gordon.

On 18th September, 1863, Charles Gordon, 10th Marquis of Huntly, died in the 71st year of his age, leaving his estates and titles to his eldest son, the present Marquis. Held in very high esteem in the elevated circle in which Providence had cast his lot, he had been appointed Lord Lieutenant of the county of Aberdeen, on the death of the Earl of Aberdeen, in 1861 ; while his many excellent qualities as a landlord had so endeared him to his numerous tenantry, that they erected to his memory the monumental pillar now

to be seen on the summit of the hill of Mortclach, behind the Castle of Aboyne.

On Wednesday, 14th July, 1869, the marriage of Charles Gordon, 11th and present Marquis of Huntly, with Amy, eldest daughter of William Cunliffe Brooks, M.P., Esq. of Barlow Hall, Lancashire, was solemnized in Westminster Abbey by the Right Rev. the Bishop of Oxford, assisted by the Very Rev. Dean Stanley and the Rev. J. Slade; and the auspicious event was celebrated by unusual rejoicings over the whole of the Aboyne estates.

In 1859 another drainage of Loch Kinnord took place, and discovered a good deal more timber belonging to the old drawbridge and Crannog. Among other relics then recovered was a canoe measuring $22\frac{1}{2}$ feet in length, and $3\frac{1}{4}$ feet in width at the stern. This canoe, after being exhibited at the meeting of the British Association in Aberdeen, was removed to Aboyne Castle, where it is still preserved.

The last recovery of important relics from the waters of Loch Kinnord was made on 10th August, 1875; when Lord and Lady Huntly met the inhabitants of the surrounding district for the purpose of taking to land a canoe, which had previously been discovered by Mr. John Simpson, Mickle Kinnord. Its position was about 80 yards from the north shore, and 200 yards due west from the Castle Island. While the people

were engaged in fixing the hauling tackle, they discovered a second canoe very near the same place. But so deeply were they sunk in the mud which had been accumulating over them for ages that the task of bringing them to land was far from easy. Under the skilful directions of Lord Huntly, however, both were brought ashore without the least injury.

These canoes, which are hollowed out of single logs of oak, measured respectively 30 ft. 2 in. and 29 ft. 3 in. in length. The width of both is somewhat irregular, varying, in the case of the longer, from 3 ft. 5 in. at the stern, to 3 ft. 7 in. at the centre, and tapering thence to the prow. The other is somewhat wider. The sides—except quite near the prows—are so much worn away that it is impossible to ascertain, with any degree of exactitude, how deep they may have been in their original condition. The thickness of the keels of both is about 7 in., but they are also much worn away. Each has four ribs or ridges across the bottom at nearly equal distances from each other, apparently the remains of what had once afforded resistance to the feet of the rowers. In respect of shape and construction, though larger in size, they are very similar to the canoe recovered in 1859.

At the same time there were brought to land two large oak beams that had belonged to the drawbridge, and two smaller coupling beams, one of which was

found inserted into a larger beam by means of a mortised hole, and fastened by a wooden pin. The largest of these beams is 37 ft. in length, has seven mortised holes, and measures on the sides $15\frac{1}{2}$ in. by $12\frac{1}{2}$ in. They may still be seen on the northern shore of the lake, nearly opposite the Castle Island.

Later in the same season another canoe was discovered by a boating party near the smaller or Crannog Island. It appears to be filled with stones ; and may have been swamped while conveying its cargo to the island, or intentionally sunk by overloading it with these stones. It has not yet been brought to land.

Besides those mentioned in this little work, many other relics of antiquity have been found in and around Loch Kinnord, of which no accurate description can now be obtained. The writer, however, believes that those he has noticed in the Appendix, most of which he has seen and examined, present a fair sample of multitudes of others that have been lost or destroyed.





Chapter XI.

STORY OF NELLIE OGG.

THE following sketch of humble life, as it existed on the shores of Loch Kinnord towards the close of last century, may not be unacceptable to the general reader as a sequel to the foregoing history.

When our story opens, Nellie Ogg was a playful little girl about twelve years of age. Her parents occupied a small croft towards the north-western end of the loch, near the place where the ancient *Al* was situated, then called the *Claggans*, a name the origin of which has already been explained. The blight of desolation, in that dreariest and deepest of all its aspects—when it follows as a reaction on unwonted stir and adventitious populousness—had fallen on the whole district. Gone were the ancient Dealich with their hill forts and lake crannogs, their sacrificial

All, and their big canoes ; gone were the early Christian preachers with their cross-incised stones, their rude churches and ruder claggans ; gone were the great English armies that had more than once been seen here in their vain attempt to subjugate the stubborn Scottish nation ; gone were the excitement and bustle wont to attend the visits of royal personages here ; gone were also the pomp and circumstance of the great baronial hall, thronged with the retinue of the high feudal lord who scarcely owned a superior ; and gone, too, were the hordes of Highland banditti, and the relentless soldiers of conquering generals, whose work was plunder and demolition—all were gone, while the wrecks they left behind them were heaps of ruins, a few fragments of blackened walls, and a confused mass of broken and disjointed timbers.

In this state the shores of Loch Kinnord had long lain almost desolate. It was a place of evil fame, haunted by the ghosts of the departed, by the denizens of the nether world and their coadjutors, the wizards and witches of the human kind ! Thus superstition had invested it with a terror which, though it kept the land tenantless, yet for long preserved the ruins from spoliation.*

* As an example of the superstitious beliefs then entertained, it may be stated that the witches, in common with the fraternity elsewhere, rode the air on broomsticks, and the wizards sailed the

By-and-by one daring sceptic after another ventured to settle on the unoccupied fields, till at length a goodly number of small huts, called "*reekan hooses*," again gave signs of human life, though in its humblest forms, in scattered clachans around the lake.

In one of these huts lived Duncan Ogg, and his wife, Tibby Turner, the parents of the subject of our story. Their habitation was humble and their substance small. The former consisted of a *but* and a *ben*,

lake in riddles—*i. e.*, corn-sieves divided into meshes by interlacing splits of wood. One of these wizards had the gifts of music and poetry to so high a degree that his fame had reached the capital; and a great lord there became exceedingly desirous of securing his services. The wizard, however, rejected all offers of such employment made to him; and it was discovered that he could not be compelled unless some greater magician were found to put him under the required spell or bondage. The services of such an one were at length secured, who, coming to Loch Kinnord under disguise, got an interview, and laid his wand upon the shoulder of this preternatural genius, who henceforth for a certain number of years became his bondsman. He now hired him out to the nobleman in Edinburgh, in whose halls he sang his songs, and at whose banquets he supplied the music. But though bound in obedience to the spell upon him to perform his task, he was not happy, for a fragment of his muse, which has survived in the traditions of the district, represents him as frequently thus soliloquizing :—

“I’d rather be on Loch Kinnord
Rowan’ in a riddle,
Than here in Edinburgh town
Playan’ on the fiddle.”

affording accommodation respectively to the bestial and the family. There were no outhouses. Indeed to have made such a separation between the rational and irrational members as would have resulted from delegating the latter to outhouses, would have been an infringement on the principles that regulated the establishment; for the bestial were accounted an integral portion of the family circle; at least they were so in little Nellie Ogg's view.

"Cromie," the cow, was so sensible and alive to her duty and station, that she knew her place in the family circle, and generally kept it, seldom stepping "ben" the house, unless when unduly excited by female curiosity to see a little of high life, or tempted by appetising odours about baking time; for she dearly loved a bit of oat cakes. But even then she never ventured farther than merely to show her "honest, sonsy face" within the "ben" door. The least commotion within that apartment was sure to bring her to a sense of her duty, and cause her to retreat in some confusion to her own quarters. She was an old servant, and respected the dignity of the family.

Very different was the conduct of the other under-members of the household. These were the three goats, whose names were Jock, Maysie, and Old Jonet. Old Jonet, it must be allowed, had some sense of decorum about her; but as for Jock and Maysie, no discipline

would teach them manners. They had been petted and pampered, and allowed such liberties in their early years that they never could be made to understand that when their beards grew they ought to behave differently. And then they were so pert and frolicsome in their ways that it was found impossible not soon to forget their acts of more serious misconduct, and fall a-petting them again. In fact, had they been human creatures they would have been entirely spoiled, and would have behaved not one whit better than they did in their brute capacity.

They lost no opportunity of stealing "ben" the house, and were not at all particular about appropriating what they found that suited their tastes, whether it were the cakes on the table, or the cold porridge set apart for the goodman's supper, when he should come in at even ; and if detected by Nellie they looked so innocent of any wrong-doing that her wrath soon fell. She would scold and threaten, generally winding up with, " Ah, Jock, Jock, ye 'll catch it, my man, when mammie comes in." Should mammie then come in, a storm was sure to burst on the head of Jock in the shape of a severe cuffing ; and then Nellie never failed to take his part, throwing her arms about his neck, and bemoaning his castigation—" Peer man ! ye 'll nae dee the like again ; noo, will ye Jock ?" If the cuffing had been unusually severe, Jock generally shed some tears

at this commiseration, which mark of penitence Nellie was not slow to plead in his favour—"Oh, mammie! I kent he widna dee't again; see he's greetan'." If the storm was not yet over, Tibby Turner would angrily answer—"Lat him greet there, the scoun'rel; I canna turn my fit about but he's sure to be in some bad ploy or ither." Seeing wrath still in store, Nellie would take hold on his horn and lead him away from further danger, saying, in a coaxing tone, "Come awa' but the house, Jockie, mammie's angry; but ye'll nae dee't again, noo will ye"? and then the two would disappear.

Thus within doors Nellie's management of the little herd was often interfered with; abroad, however, it was supreme, and there, it must be allowed, there was less ground to complain of the misconduct of any member of it. Nellie, in short, was goat-herd, and considered the three as peculiarly under her protection. Not only did they look to her for guidance in all matters, but by some rule of goat-life they kept their respective stations among themselves. The leadership was so absolutely in the hands of Jock that on no occasion would either of the other two presume to march without having him as vanguard. Maysie, it is true, was always by his side, and usually only a neck behind, while Old Jonet brought up the rear. Should, by any chance, men or dogs disturb this order of march, there was no peace

till it was again restored. If hunted, Maysie would wheel round, bleat, and stamp the ground with all fours until she gained her wonted position close by the side of, but a neck behind her leader, where she would boldly join him in offering defiance to all foes. In these times of danger Jonet kept close in the rear, though at other times she allowed herself a considerable latitude of movement.

The Castle Island was their pasture ground. It was then so encumbered with the mouldering *debris* of its former buildings that goats alone could safely pasture among the ruins. The access was over the remains of the old drawbridge, then an unsightly mass of spars and beams. Nellie, who was agile and sure of foot as any of her own goats, had been so long accustomed, evening and morning, to make her way through the labyrinth of timbers, pacing carefully along a spar here, bounding more freely along a plank there, now cross-wise, now forward, zig-zagging her way from mainland to island and back again, that it was believed she would not have missed a foot had she been blindfolded.

Poor Nellie ! One morning the goats were led forth by her father and conducted to the end of the drawbridge. Arrived there, he tried hard to make them take the planks ; but in vain. They had been accustomed to be led, and they would not be driven. As far as he judged it safe he walked on before them, talking to

them as his daughter had been wont to do ; but it was not the shepherd's voice, and they would not follow. That day, nor for many days thereafter, the goats went not to the Castle Island.

And where was Nellie ? At home, abed, and very, very sick. Days passed, and she became worse. At length some fiery red spots on her brow disclosed her malady. It was small-pox. From the attack, which was a severe one, she barely escaped with her life. Her young and vigorous constitution alone brought her through it ; but though her step at length regained its firmness and her voice its tone, her cheek had for ever lost its colour and her eye its lustre. Poor Nellie was blind. From the day she fell sick to the day she was able to walk abroad again no attempt had been made to force the goats across the old drawbridge ; but in the wan-lerings of her mind, when the hot fever was on her brain, she kept up an almost continuous conversation with Jock, Maysie, and Old Jonet, as in imagination she led them to and from the island along the well-remembered planks of the ruined fabric of confused timbers, warning them of danger here, and of some sharp turn requiring caution there.

Soon after her restoration to health she insisted on resuming her former charge. To humour her she was allowed to be with them about the doors ; but for some time she was not permitted to follow them out of sight of

her mother. Seeing how well she managed, and how guarded she was whenever she ventured on unfamiliar ground, a less strict watch was by and bye kept over her movements. One day when she had been absent beyond her usual time, her mother went out to see what had become of her. Terror-stricken she beheld her blind child walking along the narrowest plank near the middle of the drawbridge, followed by Jock, Maysie, and Old Jonet, in the old established order. The mother saw no more, for covering her face with her hands that she might not behold her child perish, she sank on the ground in a sort of stupor. Nellie and her charge had been to the island and were now returning; and ere the mother had recovered from her fright, they were all safe on the mainland. Nellie was severely reprimanded for her thoughtless daring; but she still maintained she could tread the planks as securely and as safely as ever she had done; and though it was long before she received her parents' permission to venture on the bridge again, it was not long till she rightly interpreted the bleating of Jock to mean, "Oh, bring us to the island, Nellie;" and Nellie had not the heart to refuse him.

So for many years blind Nellie Ogg conducted her father's goats to and from the Castle Island along the planks of the ruined drawbridge. Hers was the last foot that ever crossed it.

At length a fearful gale swept the middle plank into the lake, and Nellie's vocation was ended. She was alive, it is said, though very old and frail, when in 1805 the workmen of the famous engineer, Telford, pillaged the drawbridge for timbers to lay the foundations of the last stone bridge over the Dee at Ballater.





A P P E N D I X.

RELICS OF ANTIQUITY

FOUND IN LOCH KINNORD.

Stone.

1. SCULPTURED STONE—

Forming Frontispiece to present work, and found at Claggan, north shore; now at Aboyne. See "Sculptured Stones of Scotland," plate XIII., vol. I.; and present History, page 43.

2. BAPTISMAL FONT—

South shore, near site of ancient Chapel and burying ground. See "Proceedings of Society of Antiquaries," vol. VI.; and present History, page 75.

3. STONE CUP—

Found at Bogangore, west end of lake, now in possession of Mr. Wm. Macpherson, Bogangore.

Bronze.**1. BRONZE VESSEL—**

Found near Castle Island about 1833, by Mr John Macpherson. See "Proceedings of Society of Antiquaries," vol. VI., plate IV. ROMAN.

2. BRONZE SPEAR HEAD—

Found near south shore of lake by Mr John Simpson, Mickle Kinnord, July, 1874. ROMAN.

Iron.**1. CROWBAR—**

Found about 1828 near the Castle Island by Mr. J. Macpherson. It was 4 ft. long, and steeled at the point—belonged probably to the last age of the fortress.

2. AXE HEAD—

Found about the same date as the above, and near the same place. It is not ancient, and probably belonged to the same period as the crowbar.

Timber.**1. OAK (Usually called grey oak)—**

Beams and planks in great abundance, mostly near the site of the drawbridge, but often in other parts of the lake—large size, and usually shaped with edged tools. Principal periods of discovery—1781, 1787, 1804, 1826—30, and 1859—61. Belonged to drawbridge.

2. BLACK OAK—

Periods of discovery as above; more plentiful at earlier than later date; planks split, sometimes charred, of rude workmanship. Supposed to have belonged to the early Crannog.

3. WOODEN BREAKWATER—

See "Proceedings of Society of Antiquaries," vol. VI.

4. OAK PILES—

Interlaced with wooden horizontal piles, and overlaid with stones. **ANCIENT CRANNOG.**

5. WOODEN FRAME WORK—

West end of lake—supposed ruins of an ancient Crannog.

See "Proceedings of Society of Antiquaries," vol. VI.

6. BOAT—

Of coble shape—supposed to belong to last period of the Fort. *See "Proceedings of Society of Antiquaries," vol. VI.*

7. CANOE—

Brought to land 16th June, 1859. It measured $22\frac{1}{2}$ feet long by $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide at the stern, tapering to a point at the prow. *See "Proceedings of Society of Antiquaries," vol. VI., and present work, page 122.*

8. CANOES—

Other two canoes, recovered on 10th August, 1875, similar to the above, the one $29\frac{1}{2}$ feet in length, the other $30\frac{1}{2}$ feet—to be seen still on the shores of the lake. *See present work, pages 122-3.*

9. CANOE—

Another canoe, not yet recovered, but discovered at the bottom of the lake near artificial island, August, 1875. *See page 124.*

The Etymology of the word Kinnord presents no unusual difficulty. It is evidently a corruption of the Celtic *Cean n' airdh* (*the end of the height*), which is descriptive of the locality,

whether the height referred to be the ridge of Culblean, or, as is more likely, the Ord at the end of which the *Al* was situated, as explained at page 39.

The following list, though not complete, will show most of the changes in spelling the name has undergone :—

- Canmore*, Fordoun and Wynton.
Cawnmoir, Ancient Huntly Papers.
Lochtcanmor, Sir Robert Gordon's History.
Lochcannor, Straloch Papers and Robertson's Map.
Kender, Ancient Acts of Parliament.
Kander, Poll Book.
Kainord, Poll Book.
Ceander, Macgillivray's Deeside.
Ceanmor, Do.
Kinord, Common Local Spelling.
Kinnord, Aboyne Papers.

The last recommends itself as being the closest to the original, and has therefore been adopted in the present work.





I N D E X.

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| ABERDEEN, 84, 87, 90, 92, 99, 101. | Allanach, 104. |
| Aberdeenshire, 23. | Angus, 92. |
| Abergeldie, 88-91. | Argyle, 77, 85, 87-90, 107, 108. |
| Aboyne, 10, 43, 51, 63-73, 87-92. — Viscount of, 87-108. | Athole, Earl of, 52-56, 60, 61, 64. |
| — 1st Earl of, 108, 112-117, 121. | Auchterfoul, 90, 91. |
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